**Tests: Comparison of Yamaha's High-Tech 750 Seca, Honda CB750F, Kawasaki KZ750 and Suzuki GS750EX**

**Plus Suzuki RM125 Waterpumper and Honda XR250R**

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**QUOTE:**
"You probably heard a familiar sound when the first 750 Seca rolled off of the assembly line. . .the distinctive 'clack' of a pile of chips dropping onto a felt tabletop. The 750 ante had just been upped." —Pg. 32

**ON THE COVER:**
Four 750s between heats at the company picnic. Hot dogs by Cycle Guide. Photo by Vic Huber.

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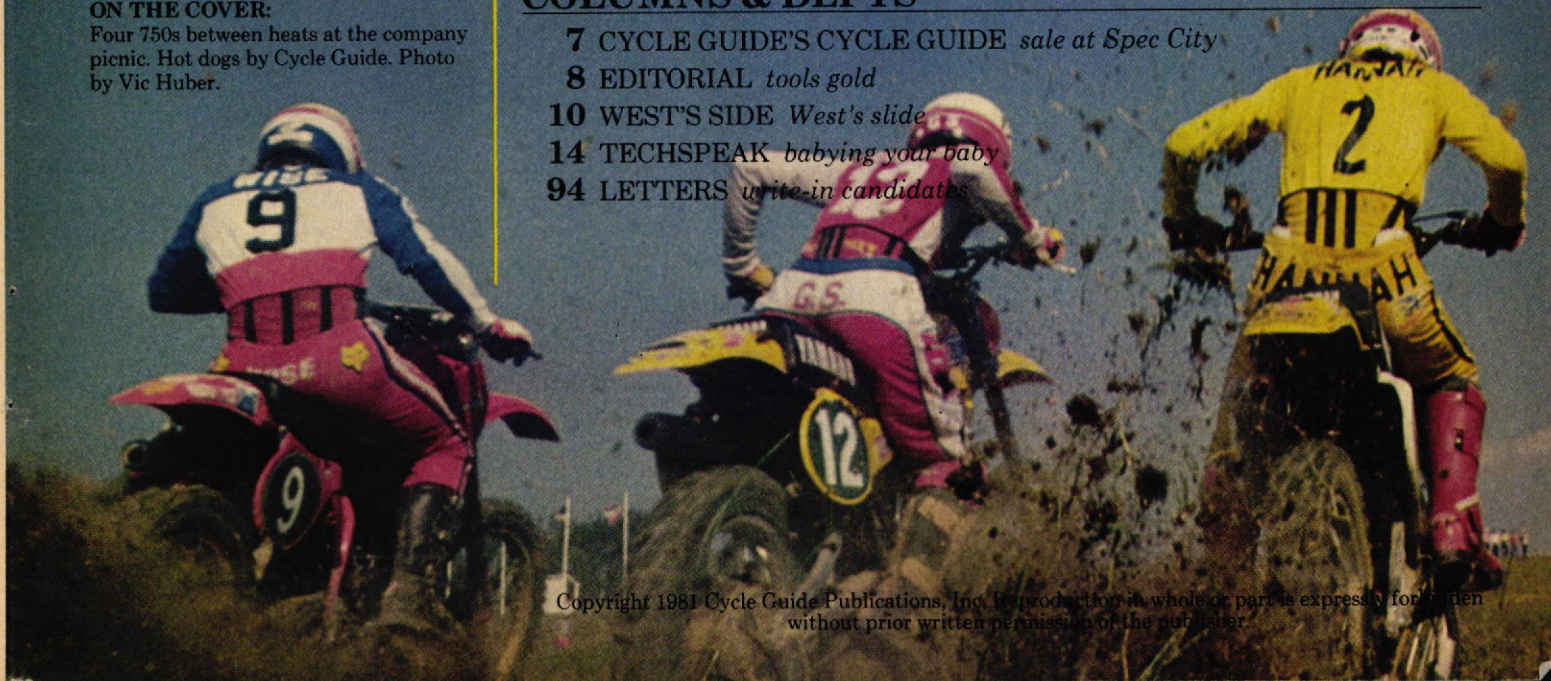

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## OFF-ROAD

| MAKE & MODEL | ISSUE | ENGINE TYPE | WHEEL TRAVEL, IN. FRONT/REAR | WEIGHT, LBS | HORSEPOWER @ RPM* | | GEARS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Can-Am 250 MX-5 | Jan. '79 | Two-str. | 10.8/10.0 | 218 | 32.1 | 8500 | 5 |
| Can-Am 250 Qualifier III | Feb. '80 | Two-str. | 9.7/9.8 | 230 | 25.2 | 8000 | 6 |
| Cam-Am 400 MX-6 | June '80 | Two-str. | 11.5/10.8 | 233 | 38.3 | 6500 | 5 |
| Honda CR125R | April '81 | Two-str. | 10.6/11.5 | 213 | NA | NA | 6 |
| Honda CR250R | May '80 | Two-str. | 11.8/11.0 | 222 | 27.5 | 7000 | 5 |
| Honda CR450R | Feb. '81 | Two-str. | 11.0/12.5 | 236 | NA | NA | 4 |
| Honda XR185 | March '79 | Four-str. | 8.0/7.75 | 221 | 12.8 | 10000 | 6 |
| Honda XR500 | May '79 | Four-str. | 8.5/8.6 | 273 | 25.8 | 6500 | 5 |
| Husqvarna 125CR-'80 | Nov. '79 | Two-str. | 11.8/11.8 | 214 | 18.8 | 11000 | 6 |
| Husqvarna 250WR | Aug. '79 | Two-str. | 9.5/9.5 | 238 | 21.9 | 6500 | 6 |
| Husqvarna 420AXC | Oct. '80 | Two-str. | 11.5/11.9 | 239 | NA | NA | 4 |
| Husqvarna 430CR | March '81 | two-str. | 11.9/11.3 | 239 | 33.3 | 6500 | 6 |
| Kawasaki KLX250 | Sept. '79 | Four-str. | 9.8/10.5 | 239 | 15.2 | 8500 | 5 |
| Kawasaki KDX175 | Dec. '80 | Two-str. | 9.6/9.8 | 222 | 15.3 | 8500 | 6 |
| Kawasaki KX125 A7 | Jan. '81 | Two-str. | 10.4/11.3 | 207 | 20.9 | 12000 | 6 |
| Kawasaki KX250 | Sept. '80 | Two-str. | 11.3/11.2 | 233 | 26.8 | 8000 | 5 |
| Kawasaki KX420 | July '80 | Two-str. | 11.0/11.3 | 250 | 34.0 | 7000 | 5 |
| Maico 400 MI | April '80 | Two-str. | 12.3/12.0 | 233 | 35.5 | 7000 | 5 |
| Maico 450 MI | April '80 | Two-str. | 12.3/12.0 | 236 | 37.0 | 7000 | 5 |
| Montesa Cappra 414 VE | Oct. '79 | Two-str. | 10.9/10.7 | 236 | 28.5 | 6500 | 4 |
| Suzuki PE400 | Nov. '80 | Two-str. | 11.3/11.3 | 250 | 30.9 | 7000 | 5 |
| Suzuki RM125T | Dec. '79 | Two-str. | 11.2/11.7 | 200 | 19.8 | 10500 | 6 |
| Suzuki RM250N | May '79 | Two-str. | 11.2/11.8 | 218 | 27.1 | 8000 | 5 |
| Suzuki RM400N | Sept. '79 | Two-str. | 11.2/11.8 | 229 | 28.1 | 7500 | 5 |
| Yamaha Pro-Tec 600 | Nov. '79 | Four-str. | 10.5/10.1 | 262 | 46.2 | 6500 | 5 |
| Yamaha IT250G | Dec. '79 | Two-str. | 9.8/9.8 | 244 | 27.7 | 8000 | 6 |
| Yamaha TT250G | Aug. '80 | Four-str. | 8.8/7.5 | 242 | 17.7 | 8000 | 5 |
| Yamaha YZ250G | March '80 | Two-str. | 11.2/11.6 | 217 | 29.6 | 8000 | 6 |
| Yamaha IT465 | May '81 | Two-str. | 10.0/11.4 | 247 | 38.1 | 6500 | 5 |
| Yamaha YZ465G | July '80 | Two-str. | 11.2/11.8 | 228 | 39.4 | 7000 | 5 |

*Horsepower shown is taken at the rear wheel and does not account for transmission losses between the engine and rear wheel. These results may differ from manufacturer's claims or from results obtained using a different dynamometer.

## STREET

| MAKE & MODEL | ISSUE | ENGINE TYPE* | QUARTER-MILE, SEC./MPH | TOP SPEED, MPH | WEIGHT, LBS | FUEL CONSUMPTION, MPG | STOPPING DISTANCE FROM 60 MPH, FT. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BMW R65 | March '81 | 2C/G | 14.16/92.1 | 110 | 423 | 45-50 | 133 |
| BMW R100RS | May '81 | 2C/G | 13.48/98.4 | 127 | 492 | 34–52 | 145 |
| Ducati Darmah | Sept. '78 | 90-deg. 2D/F | 13.41/97.5 | 118 | 487 | 25–40 | 120 |
| Dunstall-Suzuki GS1000 CS | July '79 | 4A/F | 11.32/117.0 | 154 | 488 | 37-.5 | 124 |
| H-D CLE Sidecar | Sept. '79 | 45-deg. 2D/F | 17.60/69.3 | 91 | 1036 | 25–35 | 181 |
| H-D Tour Glide | Sept. '80 | 45-deg. 2D/F | 15.58/83.9 | 108 | 785 | 35–44 | 161 |
| Honda CB400T Hawk | March '80 | 2A/F | 14.37/88.6 | 100 | 391 | 51–65 | 139 |
| Honda CX500 Custom | Aug. '79 | 80-deg. 2E/G | 14.12/92.9 | 102 | 468 | 44–51 | 146 |
| Honda CB650 | Feb. '79 | 4A/F | 13.29/99.9 | 113 | 447 | 37–51 | 131 |
| Honda CB650 Custom | Dec. '79 | 4A/F | 13.10/99.8 | 113 | 447 | 44–52 | 131 |
| Honda CB750F | Oct. '79 | 4A/F | 12.41/106.8 | 128 | 524 | 31–52 | 135 |
| Honda CB750C | Nov. '80 | 4A/F | 12.68/105.3 | 128 | 530 | 39–46 | 131 |
| Honda CB900C | June '80 | 4A/G | 12.44/107.9 | 132 | 588 | 37–44 | 155 |
| Honda Interstate | March '80 | 4C/G | 13.40/96.0 | 121 | 718 | 33–45 | 146 |
| Honda CBX | May '81 | 6A/F | 12.01/113.9 | 136 | 646 | 23–40 | 130 |
| Kawasaki KZ440D | Feb. '81 | 2A/F | 14.59/89.1 | 107 | 383 | 56-64 | 135 |
| Kawasaki KZ550 | Sept. '80 | 4A/F | 13.45/97.1 | 103 | 426 | 37–51 | 150 |
| Kawasaki KZ750 | May '80 | 4A/F | 12.50/107.8 | 127 | 471 | 39–50 | 134 |
| Kawasaki KZ1000J | Feb. '81 | 4A/F | 11.62/116.3 | 130 | 521 | 30–51 | 135 |
| Kawasaki KZ1300 | April '81 | 4A/F | 11.62/117.6 | 140 | 559 | 38–44 | NA |
| Kawasaki Z1-R | April '80 | 4A/F | 12.24/110.6 | 130 | 552 | 35–48 | 131 |
| Kawasaki KZ1300A GT | Sept. '80 | 6A/G | 12.71/107.4 | 135 | 730 | 31–45 | 146 |
| Laverda 1200 Jota | Dec. '78 | 3A/F | 12.54/105.0 | 121 | 518 | 29–37 | 145 |
| R.C. Turbo CB750F | Oct. '80 | 4A/F | 11.99/113.8 | NA | 523 | 27–39 | 135 |
| Suzuki GS450 ST | May '80 | 2A/F | 14.09/92.5 | 100 | 397 | 55–57 | 127 |
| Suzuki GS750ET | July '80 | 4A/F | 12.62/105.5 | 122 | 523 | 39–55 | 130 |
| Suzuki GS1000E | Aug. '80 | 4A/F | 11.98/113.9 | 136 | 528 | 32–50 | 137 |
| Suzuki GS1000G | Aug. '80 | 4A/G | 12.34/110.8 | 139 | 564 | 30–51 | 141 |
| Suzuki GS1100ET | April '80 | 4A/F | 11.43/118.3 | 140 | 544 | 37–49 | 116 |
| Triumph Bonneville Special | July '79 | 2A/F | 13.94/96.2 | 110 | 411 | 45–55 | 175 |
| Yamaha RD350LC | Dec. '80 | Two-str. 2/AF | 13.23/101.0 | 113 | 328 | NA | 126 |
| Yamaha XJ650 Maxim I | June '80 | 4A/G | 12.60/107.4 | 120 | 453 | 40–54 | 128 |
| Yamaha XJ650 | Nov. '80 | 4A/G | 13.19/102.4 | 125 | 476 | 43–44 | NA |
| Yamaha Virago | March '81 | 75-deg.2D/G | 13.28/99.8 | 105 | 481 | 47-51 | 132 |
| Yamaha ZJ550E Seca | May '81 | 4A/G | 12.99/101.7 | 121 | 418 | 44–55 | 119 |
| Yamaha XS850LG | Feb. '80 | 3A/G | 13.10/101.7 | 116 | 548 | 42–55 | 144 |
| Yamaha XS1100LH | Jan. '81 | 4A/G | 11.99/113.5 | 130 | 562 | 41–46 | 133 |

*A-Transverse Vertical, B-Vertical, (single-cylinder only), C-Horizontally Opposed, D-Tandem Vee, E-Transverse Vee, /F-Chain Final Drive, /G-Shaft Final Drive, /H-Belt Final Drive

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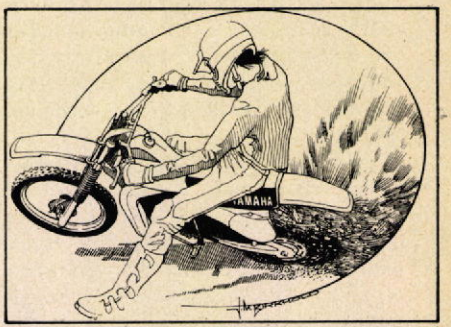

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# Editorial

## A Tool's Paradise

*And now a word from Hardware-R-Us.*

• It doesn't take much more than a single set of bloody knuckles to convince most riders that they've been duped. They begin to suspect that they're the victims of a cruel hoax, led on by shills in the form of the toolkits on their motorcycles. In short order, they grow to regard those kits as just an attractive nuisance stuck under a seat or tucked behind a sidecover, waiting fall short during some unplanned and unwelcome roadside repair.

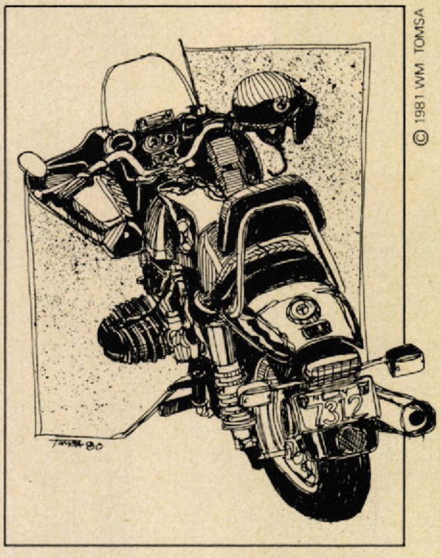
In many ways, they're right. If you've attempted anything much more involved than changing a burned-out taillight bulb with the pot-metal tools that come with most motorcycles, you already know the feeling. It's the sick realization that some vital tool is missing—or non-functional or poorly designed—and it usually comes about mid-point in trying to fix the sort of unanticipated breakdown that machines are heir to.

You find, as you sift through that blister-packed marvel of compaction concealed on your bike, a collection of implements cunningly contrived to be *almost* sufficient to handle what you're trying to fix. The tools are—with rare exception—almost strong enough to break free that frozen Phillips screw without deforming; almost long enough to reach what you're trying to adjust without leaving the brand of a hot exhaust pipe on your forearm; and finally, almost small enough to fit back into the standard-issue Pandora's vinyl pouch after you've either finished or simply given up.

Almost.

Granted, the toolkits on most bikes are only intended as a fallback. They're the bastard offspring of flinty-eyed cost-effectiveness and reality, the patent impossibility of including everything you might need. It's unrealistic to expect a manufacturer to pack all the myriad hardware necessary to break down even the simplest motorcycle into its component bearings, pins and nuts. And the effect that recent technology has had on the problem is illustrated nicely by the prospect of tearing into some of the current wave of Hi-Tech machinery, where peeking inside a case is apt to expose something as complex and owner-repairable as a sealed black box or a microchip.

Sheer bulk alone points out the foolishness of imagining that you can get all of the tools you want—or need—into a package even as small as the motorcycle itself. And if the retail price of a new motorcycle had to take into account all the tools you'd need to perform major maintenance—from a simple well-made screwdriver to a carb balancer to the special factory tools—the effect would be to slice the number of motorcycles sold drastically. So in thinking about OEM toolkits, you have to allow that there are plenty of reasons why motorcycles come with the tools that they do. But.



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But the situation that exists on most modern motorcycles is one of subtle discouragement. Rather than assist in roadside maintenance, the OEM kit becomes a deterrent to trying much of any repair outside of the sanctuary of your own garage. In short, a reason to avoid maintenance. And so, the toolkit that should enable you to adjust a chain or to check for a loose axle nut becomes a frustration—perhaps enough of an annoyance to convince you to wait until you've got your "home tools" in hand. Maybe too long.

Of course, there's nothing short of inertia preventing you from putting together a worthwhile kit, one whose tools won't bend, stretch or strip when you need them. One that has more of what you need to do emergency service. You can even make use of the stock kit. Salvage a few parts—shock preload spanners and anything else calibrated specifically for your bike—and use the rest as a model for a proper kit. Just improve the quality of the tools by a factor of three, throw in a few valuables like a good air-pressure gauge and some consumable hardware—wire, tape, fuses and sparkplugs—and you're set. You'll have to get creative in stashing your revamped toolkit unless there's some open space in a tail-section compartment, but you'll have a kit that suits your needs and the needs of your motorcycle.

Of course, once you go to all the effort of designing the right kit, tracking down all the parts that make it right and redesigning your motorcycle to store all that gear, you'll have something more than a mere set of utensils. You'll have a first-hand lesson in cost-effectiveness. You'll realize—up close and personal—the effect on your wallet when you have to pay twice to get a first-rate toolkit on your bike—once when you paid for it as a part of the whole package, and once when you had to correct its numerous flaws.

When you stop to consider the toolkit dilemma, you somehow get the impression that the right people aren't paying attention, that the manufacturers simply missed the point. At point of purchase you're presented with a part of your new motorcycle that looks cheap and reminds you of open compromise every time you lay hands on it. It doesn't make sense when you figure that a really good toolkit is not only a handy thing to have around, it's an object of pride. Something that tunes up your enthusiasm, even if the only use you have for it is to haul it out occasionally and admire it. The rewards to the manufacturer seem wholly disproportionate to the cost of including a well-made kit. The raving in every moto-mag that ever tested a BMW stands as proof positive of that assertion.

But aside from the effect of making you feel good about your motorcycle, and going some distance toward solving the U-Fix-It quandry that could present itself anytime you're out riding, the core of the toolkit question has been missed entirely. It's not just the tools themselves that are at issue here. They are more than simply means to an end. They are a visible, hand-held link with the unique and intimate relationship that exists between rider and motorcycle—a link that's missing in every other form of motorized transportation. A proper toolkit speaks of self-sufficiency, of passionate, enthusiastic involvement, and does it in clear, simple language. To fail to cater to that passion by providing little more than a vestigial toolkit—or to miss the connection completely—is to miss by a long shot.

*—Larry Works*

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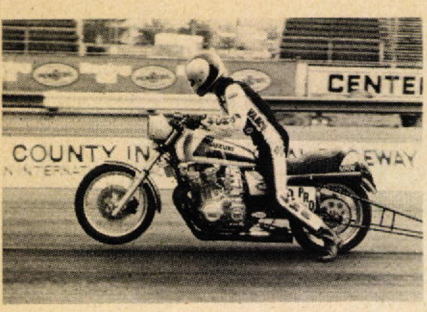

Terry Vance #1 NMRA-IDBA
PRO-STOCK CHAMPION

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**TERRY VANCE/VHR** captured his 6th national championship in PRO-STOCK. Terry's GS1100 set both ends of the record (8.77 e.t./151.26 mph) and was the 1st in his class to go over 150 mph on his way to winning both the NMRA and IDBA championships.

**MIKE BRUSO/POWER ENTERPRISES** in A/F class set both ends of the record in NMRA with a 7.82 e.t. at 177.86 mph. Mike's Kawasaki captured the Super Eliminator championship and is also the world's fastest naturally aspirated motorcycle.

**JON BAUGH/ORIENT EXPRESS** was NMRA runner-up with his A/DT Kawasaki for Super Eliminator. Baugh holds his class record at 169.49 mph.

21
Kawasaki

Eddie Lawson/Team Kawasaki

### ROAD RACING

The most rugged challenge where consistency in performance separates the winners from the pack. TSUBAKI chain users have dominated superbike roadracing for 4 years now.

**REG PRIDMORE'S** Kawasaki won the championship for 3 consecutive years.

**TEAM KAWASAKI** riders Eddie Lawson and Dave Aldana did a brilliant job of riding in '80 for the superbike title. Team manager Gary Mathers uses and endorses Tsubaki exclusively for its proven endurance.

John O'Mara/Team Mugen Winner
125 U.S. G.P.

### MOTOCROSS RACING

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**JOHN O'MARA/TEAM MUGEN** in his first year of national competition overcame all the odds at the U.S. 125 GP. He charged through the mud and mire to be the first American and the first privateer to win this prestigious race.

**MARTY MOATES/TEAM LOP** facing the best international riders ever assembled won the United States Grand Prix. This is the first time in history an American won this event.

The Jammer, "World's Fastest Harley"

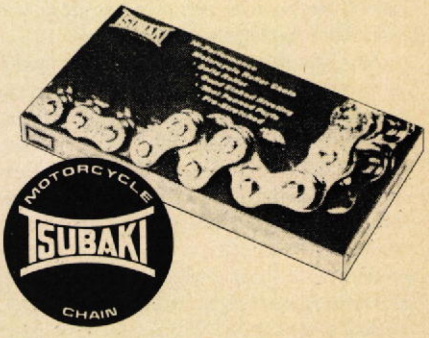
**BONNEVILLE** salt flats has for decades given man one week in which to set the world's top speed record. Tsubaki chain went along for the ride when Bob George in The Jammer Streamliner captured the S-AS-300 record at 276.375 mph. The twin Harley powered machine is "The World's Fastest Harley."

**HI-PERFORMANCE "QR" SERIES** Solid rollers, shot peened parts, special alloy steel, extra heavy press fit pins, quad staked riveting. Each chain is prestressed/prestretched on actual sprocket teeth.

**520 "PRO" SERIES** All of the above features of the QR series with the addition of shouldered and projected bushing design which virtually eliminates kinking—especially designed for high power dirt bikes . . . sand, mud, grit, water won't stop it!

**"HSL" SERIES SELF-LUBE CHAIN** Extra heavy link plates, sintered metal bushings engineered to critical tolerances, and specially formulated lubricant impregnated in the bushings. Proven in thousands of hours of roadracing, this is a true self lubricating chain for the road touring enthusiast.

**NICKEL PLATED "530QR/NP" SERIES** Has all the features of the hi-performance QR series together with a brilliant show quality nickel finish. Tsubaki's unique plating avoids hydrogen embrittlement and also acts as a rust inhibitor.



**TSUBAKI MOTORCYCLE CHAIN**
UST, Inc., Wheeling, Illinois 60090, U.S.A.
ALSPEED PRODUCTS, Ltd.,
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

# West's Side

## The Briar Patch

*Get down, get down. Then get back up.*

• It was all good news. The Mexican joint in Salinas still had the best *menudo* and *chile verde* in the world, Monterey still knew how to be foggy and cold and weird in mid-August, the log cabins at Lucia in Big Sur still felt like 1938. And Gordon and Margaret in Santa Barbara could still drink beer harder, dance longer and hoot louder than any two people in the galaxy.

Home was still home. I could relax.

If you've ever gone home for the first time in a few years and had enough time for looking around, you know the feeling. Everything seems comfortable and familiar, and at exactly the same time, nervously foreign. So you look twice as hard, trying to recapture it all in one glance.

For a solid month, I'd been doing just that—looking twice as hard. I'd ridden up and down California like a terrier loose in the back alley, trotting busily from garbage can, to fire hydrant, to fencepost, trying to make it all mine again. And it had been perfect. I'd scouted everything I wanted to scout, whiffed everything I wanted to whiff, chased every cat that wasn't too big or close for comfort. I was one happy dog.

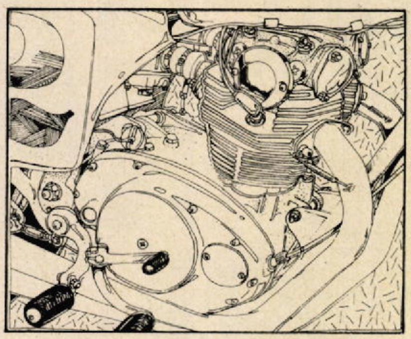
But finally, it was time to head back.

The Honda CX500 I was riding had a little better than 4000 new miles on the clock, and it had taken every bit of my wandering-terrier enthusiasm (as well as two obscenely missed shifts) without complaint. With its saddlebags full and junk piled high on the luggage rack, I'd dragged its pegs all the way down through Big Sur and it had only hollered, *"Go fer it!"* By now, we knew everything there was to know about each other. We were buddies.

So coming off the San Diego Freeway in Los Angeles, with just three miles left before the CX would disappear into the back door of CYCLE GUIDE, we loped along easily. No time for peg-grinding here, we were back in the city.

My eyes scanned the pavement ahead as I leaned the bike into the long, sweeping cloverleaf that led around to Artesia Blvd., riding at a leisurely 40 mph. The concrete was blackened from year after year of Chivalay Bel Airs dropping oil and sun baking it in—but all city pavement looks like that.

As the offramp re-entered Artesia, the pavement narrowed dramatically. So, feeling jaunty, like a Trophy Dash winner on the cool-off lap, I slowed down even more, to about 30. And at that final instant coming onto Artesia, I saw it, the gleaming oval dead ahead six feet from my front wheel—the Briar Patch.



© 1981 CORY ADELMAN

There was no time, of course. In fact, a piece of the time was missing entirely, the instant when the wheel ran over the oil. To this day, I can't make myself believe that instant existed—only the instant before it, riding along with easy thoughts, and the instant afterward, grinding across the pavement on my leathers . . . shoulder, elbow, back, knees . . . and the CX500 crashing along on its side behind me in a thunderstorm of roaring and sparks.

I came to rest in 20 feet, facing the bike. The engine raced, then died with a groan. There was something heartbreaking about the CX. It looked like a dead horse, hooves in the air, carcass stiffening.

I felt no pain, nothing but pity. So I tried to stand up immediately. But standing up was harder than it used to be. My body felt like it weighed 300 pounds. My knees tensed for a moment, getting used to the new weight.

As soon as they had, though, I took a step—staggering, feeling drunk—then rushed to the bike. I began struggling with it furiously. I couldn't stand seeing it lying on its side an instant longer. Someone grabbed my elbow and asked if I was all right, but it made no sense—*of course* I was all right! I'm riding home from a perfect 4000-mile tour and none of this is happening . . . .

As the immovable weight of the bike against my shoulder gradually sank in, however, the truth was clear. This had already *finished* happening.

Somebody in the intersection behind me honked his horn and, for the first time, I realized the motorcycle was blocking Artesia Blvd. And I also realized that my body, too, had been blocking Artesia Blvd.

People ran toward me. I was tugging desperately on the handlebar now, at an angle that had no chance of righting the bike. I was a little out of my mind with it. The others began to lift the bike by its saddle and luggage rack, and at last I was lifting with them in a sensible way. The bike came up to its wheels. I was shaking.

One of them tried to take the bar from my hands to push the bike out of the road, but I resisted, with thanks, and walked it ahead to the curb, almost falling once, my balance no better than the bike's now. I felt like I was in a freak mid-summer snowstorm. I was freezing cold. I knew there was nothing seriously wrong—my elbow hurt, my hand hurt, my knee hurt, but nothing was broken, nothing seriously wrong, except this cold.

I walked around the bike, staring. Finally, on the fourth trip around it, I saw that a turnsignal stanchion was broken off. And the end of the throttle grip had been torn away. There were gouges in the saddlebag crash bars, the header pipe, the edge of the fairing. Minor.

But as if the remnants of pride were all I had left, I started the bike almost immediately. I don't know how long the incident took—though I would guess no more than three minutes—but without waiting for the rest of me to come back, I rode straight to CYCLE GUIDE. There I told the story over and over, as if telling it would somehow make it not have happened. Everyone smiled, told their own stories about the Briar Patch, allowed as how it would all be okay. And they were all kind enough not to mention the obvious, that I wasn't quite right for the rest of the day.

That night I was totally exhausted and went to bed early. But I awoke before midnight, awash in sweat in spite of the thick, cold coastal fog flowing in through the open window. I lay there wide awake, trying to forget the dream I'd had about riding through Big Sur to Hurricane Point, climbing up to the very tip of it where the road hairpins sharp left on the lip of the precipice, the Pacific Ocean three yards to my right and 1200 feet straight down at the bottom of an endless, sheer rock wall, the water so far below that the waves look like little creases in a vast, glinting sheet of aluminum foil, my bike leaned over hard left coming into the turn, throttle on, pegs grinding, and in the last instant, the gleaming oval coming up at me dead ahead on the pavement, rushing at me six feet from my front wheel, the Briar Patch. . . .

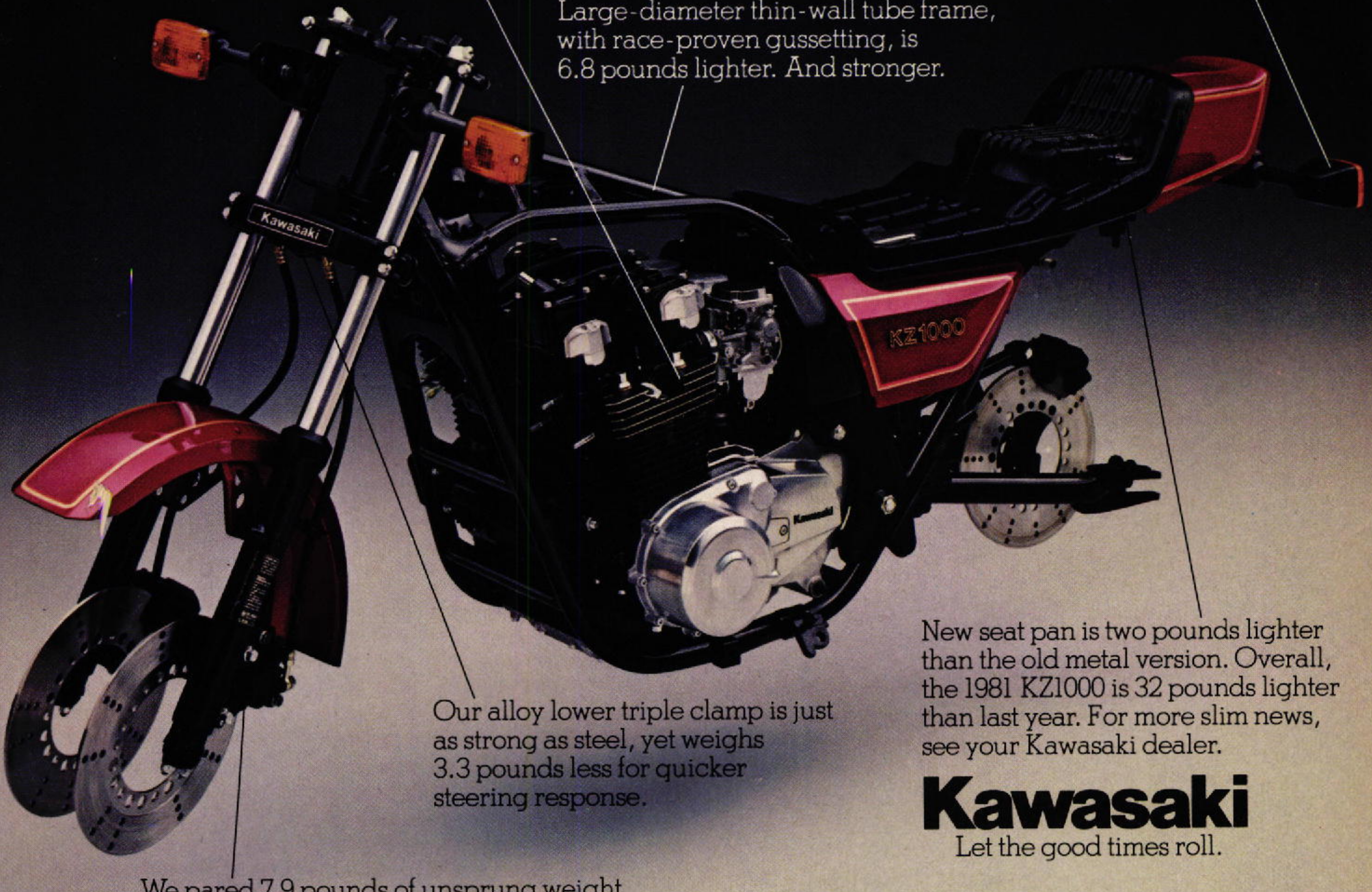
*—Ted West*

# KAWASAKI UNCOVERS ITS LOSSES.

Kawasaki for '81. Lighter and faster than ever. On our new KZ1000, for example, we trimmed 15 pounds off the engine and wound up with more power and torque. All without sacrificing an ounce of reliability.

Not even the turn signals and their stalks survived the weight purge. Now they weigh 1.1 pounds less.

Large-diameter thin-wall tube frame, with race-proven gussetting, is 6.8 pounds lighter. And stronger.



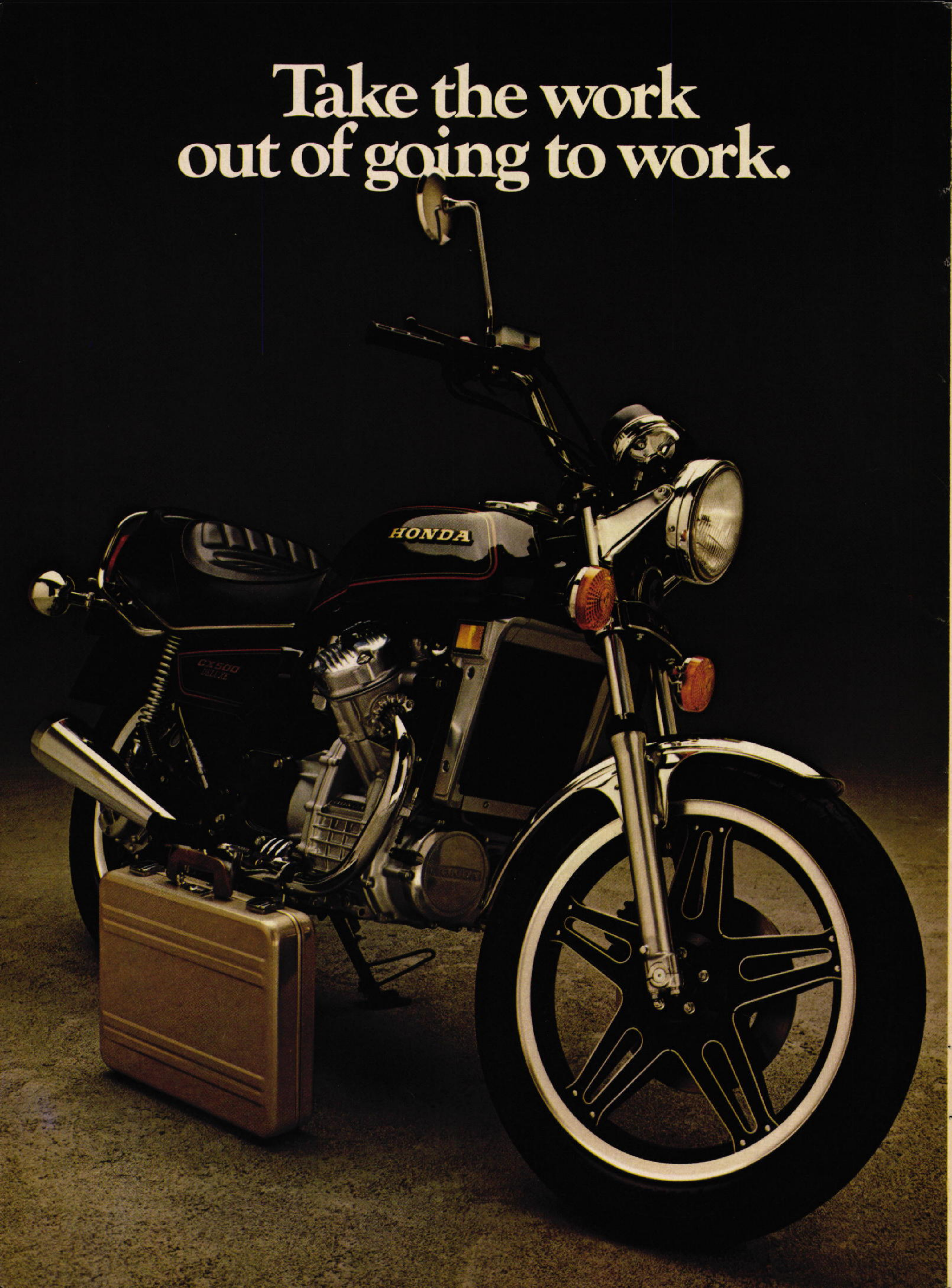
Our alloy lower triple clamp is just as strong as steel, yet weighs 3.3 pounds less for quicker steering response.

New seat pan is two pounds lighter than the old metal version. Overall, the 1981 KZ1000 is 32 pounds lighter than last year. For more slim news, see your Kawasaki dealer.

**Kawasaki**
Let the good times roll.

We pared 7.9 pounds of unsprung weight from the front end by steamlining the brake calipers and bolting thinner discs directly to the hub.

Specifications subject to change without notice. Availability may be limited. Kawasaki believes in riding safely. Check local laws before you ride. Member, AMA, and MSF.


Take the work out of going to work.
HONDA
CX500

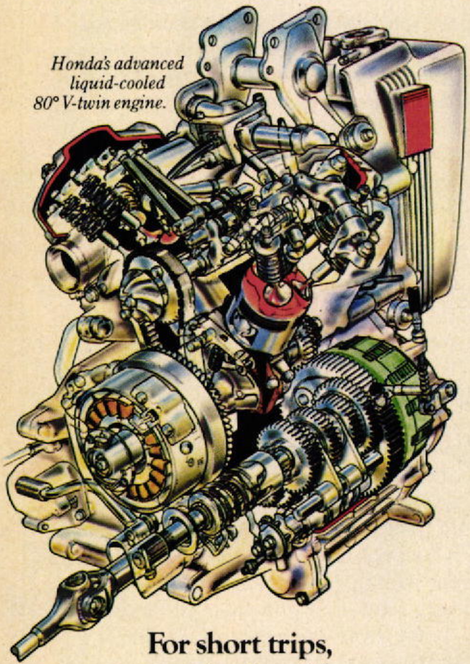
Hardly anybody likes going to work.

But maybe it's not the work that's the problem.

Maybe it's the going.

Maybe you've had enough of sitting in traffic listening to gas and oil prices go up. Maybe your commute has become more of a job than your job. Maybe your routine has become entirely too routine.

And maybe, just maybe, it's time you took a good, long, serious look at the 1981 Honda CX500 Deluxe.


*Honda's advanced liquid-cooled 80° V-twin engine.*

## For short trips, an engine bred for long trips.

Trouble with most commuter bikes is that they're just that, commuter bikes. Designed to get you to work and back. Period.

Not the CX500 Deluxe.

The CX500 Deluxe was designed to go cross country as easily as across town.

Its engine is the advanced 80° V-twin which also powers Honda's Silver Wing™ touring bikes. Liquid-cooled for quiet operation, and more consistent operating temperatures. So even if you do get caught in an occasional traffic jam, you at least won't have to worry about overheating.

This exclusive Honda design features four valves per cylinder, rather than the usual two. For better, more efficient combustion. It is fired by Tri-Pulser™ capacitor discharge ignition which is virtually maintenance-free. And fed by two 34 mm constant velocity carburetors. With an accelerator pump for smooth throttle response.

But one of the best things about the engine is how it's mounted. The crankshaft is parallel to the drive shaft.

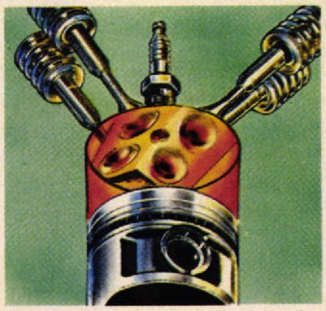
So there is only one change in the direction of powerflow from the engine, back through the shaft drive to the rear wheel. And the fewer changes there are, the less power is lost.

## What good is riding to work if you're too tired to work when you get there?

If you're going to ride a motorcycle every day, it had better be comfortable.

Which is exactly what the CX500 Deluxe was designed to be. So comfortable you may begin to wish your commute were longer so you could spend more time on the bike and less on the job.

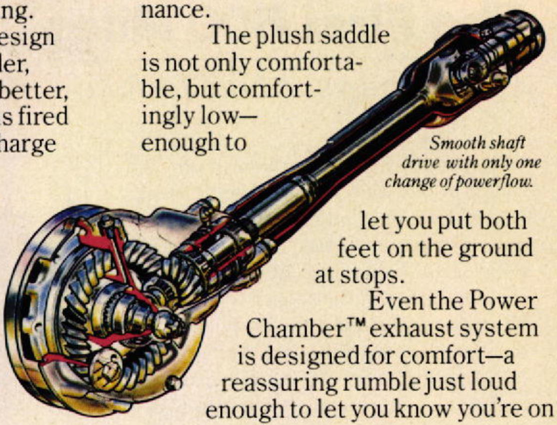
The front forks have two Syntallic™ bushings in each leg to cut friction and ensure smooth movement. And, to help custom tailor the ride to your preference, they're air-adjustable through one simple air equalizer fitting.


*High combustion efficiency four valve head.*

In the rear, Variable Hydraulic Damping shocks help take the bump out of the daily grind.

And in between, shaft drive for smoothness, quiet and low maintenance.

The plush saddle is not only comfortable, but comfortingly low—enough to let you put both feet on the ground at stops.


*Smooth shaft drive with only one change of powerflow.*

Even the Power Chamber™ exhaust system is designed for comfort—a reassuring rumble just loud enough to let you know you're on a motorcycle.

And the whole package cruises on tubeless tires mounted on Com-Star™ wheels which are as easy on your eye as the ride is on the rest of you.

## What to do when you don't go to work.

If you think riding the CX500 Deluxe is a joy on the way to work, wait till you see what it can do with a weekend.

It can take two of you on a cruise around town or out of town. It can make places you've seen hundreds of times before seem brand new.

And if, like a lot of people, you choose to add some of the many available touring options, the CX500 Deluxe will take you as far as you have time to go.

In comfort. And style.

But since there are only two weekend days for every five work days, there is one alternative you may want to consider when you take delivery on your CX500 Deluxe.

Moving farther away from work.

**HONDA**

**FOLLOW THE LEADER**

ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET AND EYE PROTECTION. Specifications and availability subject to change without notice.

© 1981 American Honda Motor Co., Inc. For a free brochure, see your Honda dealer.

Or write: American Honda Motor Co., Inc. Dept. 546, Box 9000, Van Nuys, California 91409.

# Techspeak

## The First 600 Miles

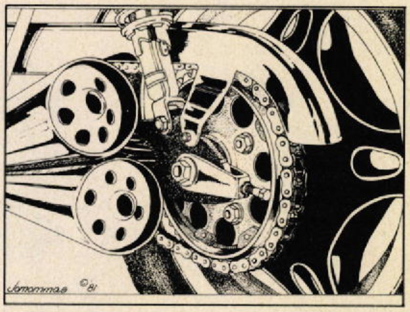
*Preparing your bike for a lifetime of service.*

• Maybe if street bikes were more like saddle broncs, they'd get the gentle break-in that they need and deserve. Instead, a new bike generally sees redline before it ever leaves the parking lot in front of the motorcycle store, the sooner to loosen up its engine and make it faster. It's no wonder that so many bikes are ready for the last roundup at the 20,000-mile mark.

Break-in is crucial to a motorcycle's long-term health because it represents the period in which all its internal pieces grow accustomed to working in proximity to one another. In the first 1000 miles your bike experiences the most rapid wear of its life as working tolerances are established. The way you approach break-in determines whether your bike ever achieves the internal harmony that it needs to deliver years of service. If you follow the manufacturer's recommendations for break-in, you'll get your bike off to a good start. But if you approach the process with the obsession of a perfectionist, your first month or so of riding will not only be more trouble-free, it will be safer.

To begin with, the ride home from the motorcycle store might not be the best way to christen your new toy. You see, the attention a bike receives when it's assembled from the crate has as much to do with its health as the manufacturing process itself. That's why it's a good idea to virtually reassemble the motorcycle yourself. You don't have to strip the bike down to its component parts, but it is a good idea to methodically check the tightness of every nut and bolt, starting at the front wheel and ending at the rear. Pretend that you're building your motorcycle from a heap of random pieces and that the result will be entered in the Daytona 200.

Once you've completed this task, you should then insure that everything has been installed correctly and to stock specifications. That means, among other things, checking tire pressures, suspension settings and oil levels (engine, transmission, shaft-drive and front fork). Inspect the air cleaner. Eyeball the brake caliper alignment to insure that there's full contact between pad and disc. Carefully assess the wheel alignment. In this way, you'll make sure that the bike will work as it's supposed to from the minute you leave your driveway.



At this point, the suspense is killing you. You're ready to fire the engine. It wouldn't hurt, however, to check the inside of the gas tank for rust or debris, and consider installing a high-volume fuel filter to back up the wire screens in the fuel taps. Finally, fill the tank with fresh, good-quality gasoline.

Whenever you're starting an engine that hasn't run in a while, it's a good idea to build up oil pressure first to keep the internals from grinding on one another. So crank the engine over with the kill button engaged for a few seconds, if possible. When you do fire the engine, run it at low and steady rpm (but not at idle) until it responds to the throttle. Only the ignorant light off a cold engine and insistently wring the throttle before the oil has reached operating temperature. This practice might speed warm-up, but only at the cost of tremendous wear. And no better way has been invented to damage a bearing or score a cam lobe.

Once you've thawed the engine, you're finally ready to get underway. Take it easy, shift early and observe the gradually escalating series of redlines your owner's manual recommends. Remember that engine tolerances are still very tight.

Your manual also admonishes you to avoid large throttle openings and to vary your speed. Essentially, you're coaxing your motor through a time in which it's literally grinding away imperfections on all its moving parts. These minute burrs, or high spots, the result of casting and machining flaws, prevent parts from sliding past one another smoothly. At your first oil change they'll be revealed as tiny flecks and streaks of silver in the oil. Indeed, it makes little sense to change your oil before the regular 600-mile service since it simply acts like a sponge to soak up all those excess silvery bits anyway. Still, you should avoid high rpm and large throttle openings since they create too much friction, and those tiny imperfections will scour your motor like sandpaper.

Your transmission, clutch and suspension should be treated with the same thoughtfulness for the first few hundred miles. The imperfections in the transmission's gears, circlips and thrust washers must be worn away. The glaze on the organic clutch plates must be broken, and flaws in the metal plates ground down. Even the suspension needs break-in, since it incorporates its fair share of moving parts and bearing surfaces. The same goes for your chain or shaft drive. Wherever there are moving parts, care must be exercised to help them work in harmony.

While you're breaking in the engine, you'll also be removing the preservative coating from the tires, and scuffing the slick tread so the rubber grips the pavement better. The cables also break-in as the outer sheath compresses with use. Most importantly, the brake pads bed-in as the excess bonding agent holding the pad material together boils away under the heat of frequent applications. Although it doesn't take much work to bed-in brakes, you can speed the process with a series of medium-hard stops that bring the pads up to temperature, followed by a very hard stop and then 10 minutes of cooling (with the motorcycle rolling).

It's a good idea to pack along a small set of tools and maybe a few extra plugs during this first ride as well. Just as with everything else, your bike's nuts and bolts are adjusting to one another and so require constant checks for tightness, especially motor mounts and exhaust bracketry.

In some ways, the break-in process seems repetitive and unnecessary, considering how few things actually go wrong during those first few hundred miles. After all, the most important aspect of a break-in is the 600-mile service check, at which point your dealer will insure that everything is adjusted properly. You should remember, though, that almost anything can be amiss in an item that's mass-produced—whether it's due to a manufacturing flaw or an assembly error. The only protection you have from being victimized by such mistakes is careful attention to quality control. The break-in process is simply an extended period for quality-assurance. Catch assembly or manufacturing mistakes early and your bike will still be singing with celestial harmony at 50,000 miles. Ignore them and you'll own a bucket of bolts before the year is past. —*Michael Jordan*

# Total Prices! Free Shipping!

### BELL

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| **Star II** pro full face | $88.95 |
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Sizes in ⅛ in. increments and many colors. Call for prices on newest 1981 models.

### nava

Comfortable Italian design has automatic-closing faceshield.

**Integral 2** $73.95

Sizes S-XXL in black, white, red, orange, yellow, light blue,

### Vetter

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| **WINDJAMMER IV** | **$369.95** |
| **WINDJAMMER V** | **$449.95** |

both complete

Black, white or silver; includes hardware, striping, std. windshield, leading edge lights, tonneau covers, adj, headlight, warranty

**Options:** Lowers w/striping **$84.95**, pop vents **$11.95**, Fiamm horns **$23.95**, quartz light **$23.95**, tall shield **add $5.95**.

| | |
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| **Vetter Sound** | **$75.95** |
| **Radar Detector** | **$249.95** |

**QUICKSILVER** **$210.95**

1981 model complete

Black, white or silver; includes hardware, mask, warranty, std. windshield, headlight

**Options:** Wing tips **$19.95**, quartz light **$36.95**, +5cm or -10 cm shield add **$5.95**, striping **$9.95**.

| | |
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| **Terraplane** fiberglass sidecar delivered to you | **$2395.** |
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### SHOEI

These sharp-looking **sport fairings** of lightweight fiberglass protect you from the wind.

**Model FM-2** for **street** bars

**Model FM-3** for **cafe-style** bars

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Full face, fog free, ratchet shield

**S-28 helmet** **$59.95**

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| **Model 30** it's radical | **$178.95** |
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Sizes 6⅞-7¾ in several colors. All are made of Kevlar 49.

### MARTEK

These top quality **electronic ignition** sets deliver high performance.

**1981 440 & 1000 series $89.95**

**Blue Goose coils** are hot!

Single **$39.95** Dual **$79.95**

### KING COBRA

1981 Electronic **anti-theft alarm** guards your bike with the latest technology and convenience.

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| **Alarm system** | **$52.95** |
| Compact, remote **pager** with CB antenna | **$129.95** |

### saddletotes

Light, low cost **soft** answer to **saddlebags.** Weather resistant nylon padded w/straps & zippers. Black. **$94.95**

### LOCKHART

These superb **oil coolers** will keep your bike running better and longer. All hardware is included.

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| **Model 500** black | **$84.95** |
| **Model 600** black | **$129.95** |
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For most model bikes.

### CITADEL

This ultra-high security **motorcycle lock** is made of ½ in. hardened alloy **$44.95**

### DIAMOND

This is the **#1 American-made chain** of steel alloy with solid rollers.

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| **530 Standard** | **$25.95** |
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### slip streamer

**Acrylic windshields.** The **Slipstreamer II** is the favortie of many tourers and the **SS-20 sport fairing** is great on the street.

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| Clear shield | **$69.95** |
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### Plexifairing

This attractive **acrylic windshield** is sleek

Clear **$94.95** Tint **$99.95**

### Dry Rider

Smile in the wind and rain with a set of this proven foul weather gear. Sealed seams give added protection. **2-piece nylon/PVC rainsuit** with boots & gloves. **$42.95**

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### TOUR MASTER

Latest **cold weather riding gear** Foam-backed nylon, heavy zippers velcro closures. Black or silver XS to XL and ladies sizes.

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| **Jacket** | **$105.95** |
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**NEW! JUST OUT!**

**Summer jacket** **$72.95**

Black, silver; XS-XL

**FITTED CYCLE COVERS**

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| **Standard**—for bikes with no accessories | **$34.95** |
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### ROAD RIDER

**Air fork kit** of aircraft quality anodized aluminum **$34.95**

### CYBERLITE

Avoid getting rear-ended with this proven **safety brake flasher.** Easy to mount.

In red or amber **$119.95**

### eclipse

**Tank bag** of tough cordura nylon has map case, handle, harness, double zippers.

Black, red or blue **$48.95**

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This new **Lucite windshield** is superbly designed.

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### KRYPTONITE

The **Super lock** of special alloys can't be cut, sawn or broken. Vinyl covered. **$36.95**

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This **luggage** has all the class and construction you expect from Samsonite—the world leader.

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These **4-into-1 exhaust systems** are recognized as the very best. They are sleek, deliver top performance with power and give a full throaty sound.

Black **$189.95** Chrome **$199.95**

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| **K91** | 510-17 | **$75.95** |
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| | 410-18 | 51.95 |
| | 425/85-18 | 54.95 |
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| | 410-19 | 52.95 |

**"R" compound add $7.95**

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| **K181** | 510-16 | **$56.95** |
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| | 460-18 | 55.95 |
| | 510-18 | 59.95 |
| | 410-19 | 54.95 |

**Raised white add $8.95**

**"R" compound add $11.95**

### Continental

| | | |
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| **RB-2** | 350-18 | **$51.95** |
| front | 325-19 | 52.95 |
| | 350-19 | 54.95 |
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| rear | 450-17 | 61.95 |
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| | 425/85-18 | 59.95 |
| | 510-18 | 60.95 |

**Tubeless add $6.95**

### MICHELIN

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| **M45** | 350-18 | **$50.95** |
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**PZ-2 add $7.95**

### GOODYEAR

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **HST** | 510-16 | **$63.95** |
| rear | 510-17 | 65.95 |
| | 400-18 | 64.95 |
| | 425-18 | 66.95 |
| | 475-18 | 67.95 |
| front | 325-19 | **$54.95** |
| | 375-19 | 60.95 |

**Raised white add $10.95**

| | | |
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| **GTII** | 510-16 | **$62.95** |
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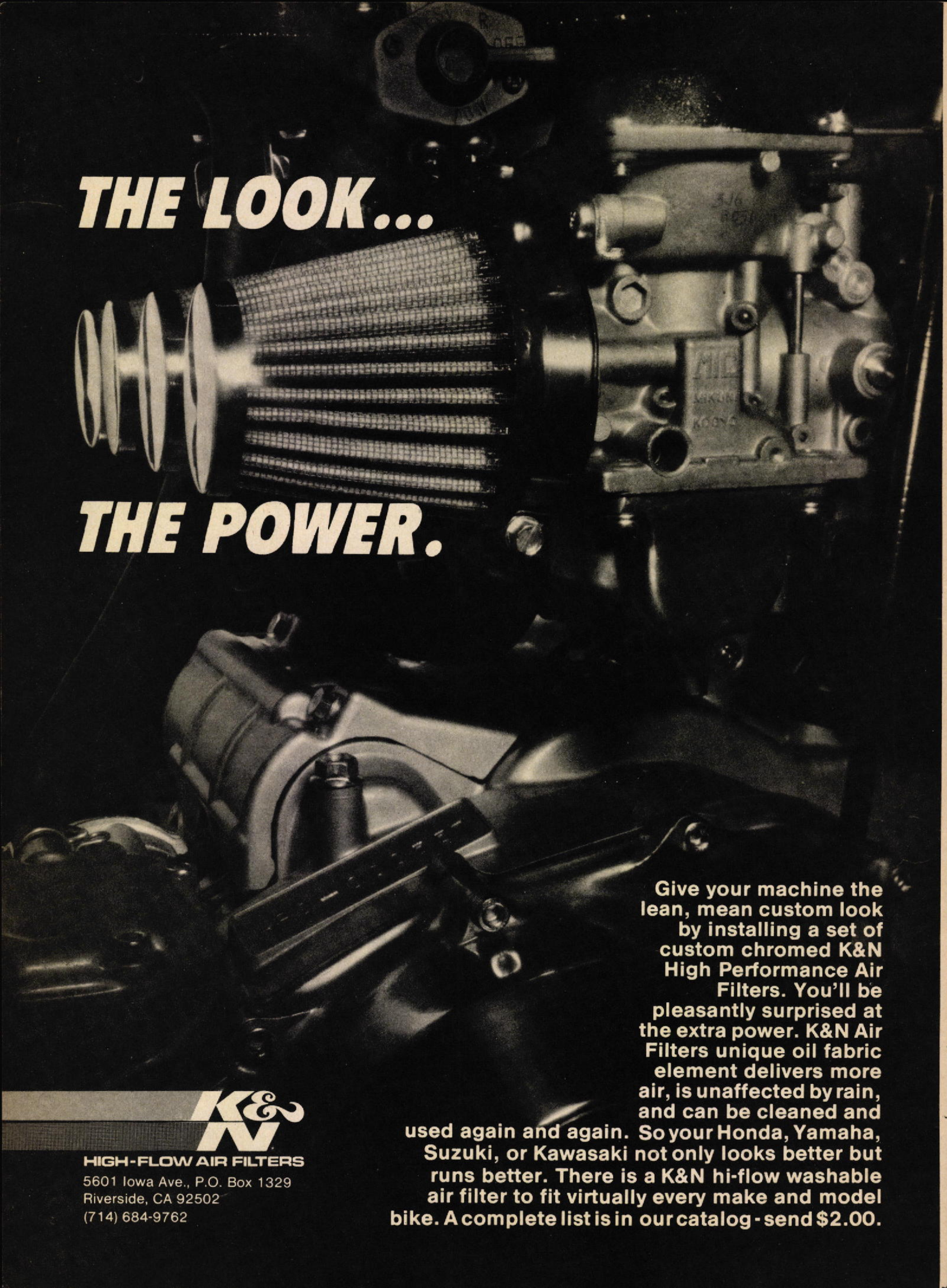

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# GUIDE LINES

*Cycle Guide's Monthly Chronicle of Scoops, Tips, Rumors and Hard Facts*

BY RILEY THARP

## COMING SOON

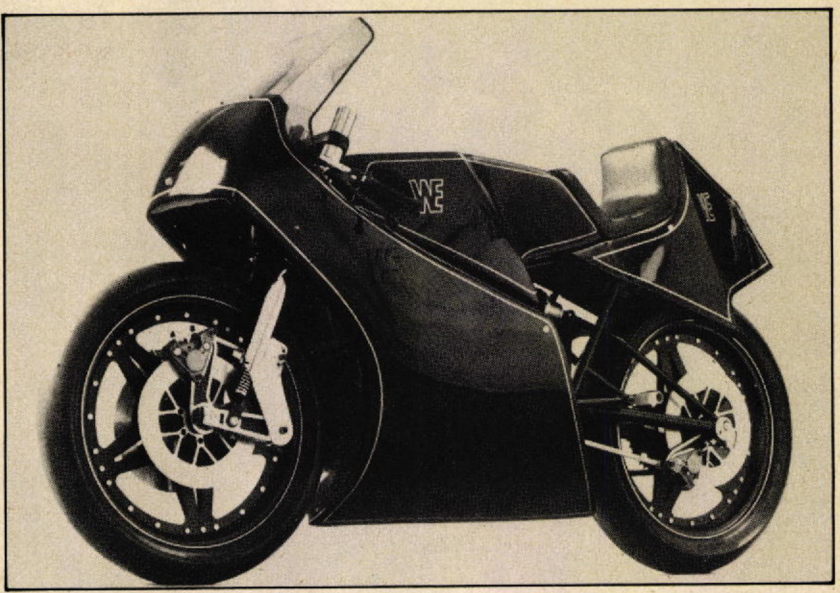
- You've seen a lot of new bikes in Guide Lines this year. Perhaps you even thought you had already seen **all** the latest machines in Guide Lines. In fact, you probably thought that **everything** you ever wanted to know about 1981 motorcycles had already appeared in this column.

Wrong, two-stroke breath.

Here's a bike you probably haven't seen before, and it certainly isn't built by us, the U.S. that is. It's the WE, which comes from the U.K. Got that? WE stands for **Waddon Engineering,** a large British design group usually associated with autos and airplanes, or aeroplanes. WE hopes to establish itself as a **legitimate** manufacturer of motorcycles with its line of roadracing machines, and then expand into the production of street bikes.

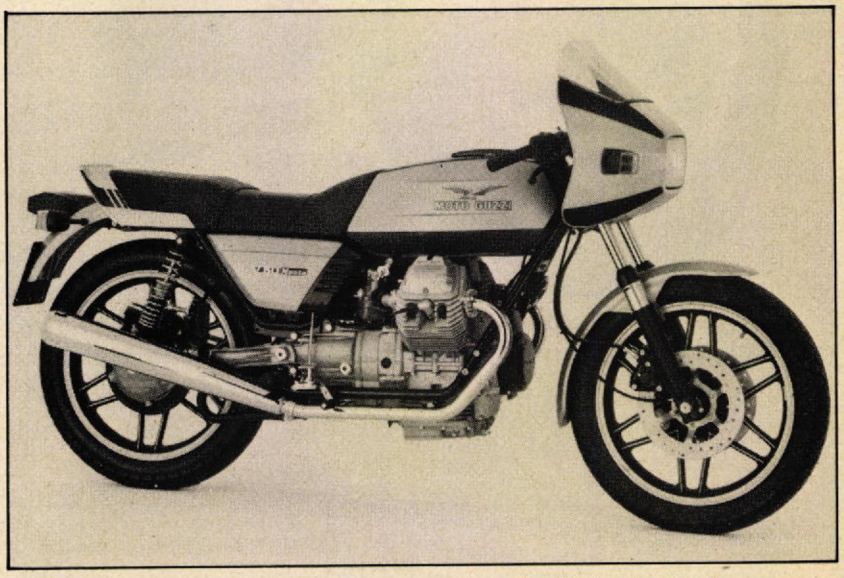
If the specifications of the roadracer are any indication, Waddon should be capable of building some pretty **innovative** street machinery. The roadracer features a five-piece frame with single-shock rear suspension. The use of a bolt-together frame allows the engine to be removed in a claimed five minutes, a real help on a maintenance-intensive racer. In addition, the individual pieces of the frame can be replaced when damaged, rather than buying an entirely new frame. An anti-dive fork *and* rear suspension are tied into the lightweight braking system. The fork is a **leading-link** design and is claimed to be extremely rigid. The basic roadracer is capable of accommodating a 125cc, 250cc or 350cc engine so the purchaser can upgrade the machine as his riding improves. That's certainly a novel cost-cutting idea.

Most of the features of the WE machines show an effort to minimize cost and streamline **production,** important considerations if the street version is to be competitively priced. Waddon Engineering seems to have the talent and resources to become instrumental in the **resurrection** of the British motorcycle industry. And if its early designs are an indication, WE could stand for wheeeee!



**Waddon Engineering's new roadracer is a testbed for street-applicable ideas**

*Perhaps WE shall overcome the British bike industry slump.*



**Moto-Guzzi is producing a "LeMans" version of its 500cc V50, called the Monza**

*This 352-pound repli-racer middleweight isn't heavy or a Chevy.*

- Repli-racer **middleweights** are all the rage this year. The Yamaha Seca 550 and the Kawasaki GPz550 represent new-wave café think. These bikes offer the choice of nimble handling and sporty performance without sacrificing civility.

In Europe, this concept is anything but new. Machines like the BMW R100S and the Guzzi LeMans are civilized sport mounts, albeit in the heavyweight division.

Now Moto Guzzi has an entry in the middleweight repli-racer class: the V50 Monza. The V50 has a claimed dry weight of only **352 pounds,** even though it has a shaft. The Monza uses the now-familiar split braking system found on larger Guzzis. Its 90-degree Vee-twin engine produces more power than the standard V50, and is claimed to deliver a top speed of 105 mph. With shaft-drive **refinement** and Vee-twin simplicity, the Monza is a noteworthy variation on the middleweight theme.

*Continued*

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|---|---|---|
| CBX | | 6-1 |
| CB 900 custom | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| CB 750 K, F & LTD. | 1979-81 | 4-1 |
| CB 750 custom | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| CB 750 K, F & LTD. | 1977-78 | 4-1 |
| CB 750 K model only | 1969-76 | 4-1 |
| CB 650 Standard | 1979 | 4-1 |
| CB 650 Std & Custom | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| CB 500 K | | 4-1 |
| CB 550 F | | 4-1 |
| CB 350 | | 4-1 |
| CB 400 F | | 4-1 |
| CX 500 | 1979-80 | 2-1 |
| Hawk | | 2-1 |
| CB 450 | | 2-1 |
| CB 500 twin | | 2-1 |
| CB 350 twin | | 2-1 |

## KAWASAKI

| | |
|---|---|
| KZ 1000 & KZ 900 | 4-1 |

Pro Race (competition use only,
must remove centerstand)

## KAWASAKI

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| KZ 1000 | | 4-1 |
| KZ 900 | | 4-1 |
| KZ 750 | | 4-1 |
| KZ 650 | | 4-1 |
| KZ 550 | | 4-1 |
| KZ 750 twin | | 2-1 |
| KZ 400 twin | | 2-1 |
| KZ 440 twin | 1980-81 | 2-1 |

## NORTON

| | |
|---|---|
| 750 & 850 Commando | 2-1 |
| 750 & 850 Commando | 2-1 |

## SUZUKI

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| GS 1100 E Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 1100 L Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 1000 E Model | 1978-80 | 4-1 |
| GS 1000 L Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 750 | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 850 E Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 850 E Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| GS 750 L Model | 1980-81 | 4-1 |

## SUZUKI

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| GS 750 | 1977-79 | 4-1 |
| GS 850 E & L | 1977-79 | 4-1 |
| GS 550 E & L | 1977-80 | 4-1 |
| GS 450 S Model | 1980-81 | 2-1 |
| GS 450 L Model | 1980-81 | 2-1 |
| GS 400 & GS 425 | | 2-1 |
| GSX 250 & GS 250T | 1980-81 | 2-1 |
| GN 400X Single | 1980-81 | 1-1 |

## YAMAHA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| XS 1100 Standard | 1978-81 | 4-1 |
| XS 1100 Special | 1978-81 | 4-1 |
| XJ 650 Maxim | 1980-81 | 4-1 |
| XJ 750 Seca | 1981 | 4-1 |
| XJ 550 Seca | 1981 | 4-1 |
| XS 750 | | 3-1 |
| XS 850 Standard | | 3-1 |
| XS 850 Special | | 3-1 |
| XS 650 twin | | 2-1 |
| XS 360 & XS 400 twin | | 2-1 |
| SR 500 Single | | 1-1 |

SUZUKI GS 450 2-1

YAMAHA 850 SPECIAL 3-1

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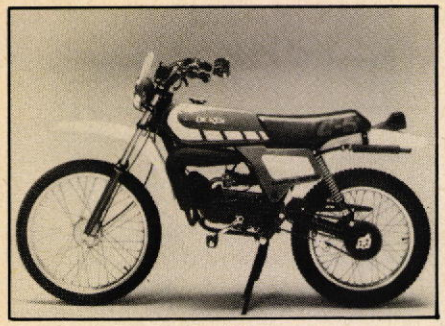

**Derbi's diminutive dirt bike**

*Moped motocrosser?*

- Here's a theme that shows just how far the moped idea can be stretched. **Derbi** now offers a **dual-purpose** model called the Diablo C-5. Don't roll your eyes just yet. First, consider its five-inch fork travel and matching rear wheel travel. Or how about the Diablo's Acront rims and trials tires? It even has a tiny chain tensioner. Add a full-cradle frame and a super-wide ratio automatic transmission and you have the makings of a **serious** moped. The Diablo comes equipped with street-legal lighting and even offers an optional **electric starter.** It's a trick starter, too. Instead of using a lead-acid battery, the Diablo has nickel/cadmium batteries that should never require maintenance. Clever. What's next? Dresser mopeds?
- A decked-out moped could be just the thing for the 1981 Vetter **Rally,** though you might get strange stares from some of the open-road set. This year's rally takes place at Loretta Lynn's Dude Ranch in Tennessee from August 11th to the 15th. Check with your local Vetter dealer for all the **details.**

## FEDERAL CASES

- Motorcycle use can be a real asset to an energy-starved nation, and Canada has set a fine example of how to acknowledge that **value.** The five percent excise tax on bikes over 250cc, originally imposed in 1974, has been **repealed** as part of the latest budget.
- Canada isn't alone in responding to the **gas saving** potential of motorcycles. In a recent amendment to the standby gas rationing program, the Department of Energy voted to **exempt** bikes from odd-even rationing days, from the minimum purchase plan (set at five gallons for cars), and from the vehicle sticker plan which limits purchases to selected days of the week. The unfortunate part of the bill is the section that limits bikes to 25 percent of the amount of fuel allotted to cars. But at least motorcycle riders can get their **meager** allotment with a minimum of hassle.
- Another blow for **freedom** from regulation was struck recently in Utah. The legislature there voted down a bill to ban the sale and use of **radar** detectors. More than 40 other states have defeated similar laws, and the reason for the defeats could be the findings of a three-year **study** commissioned by the federal Department of Transportation. This study, which was recently published in the Federal Register,

*Continued*

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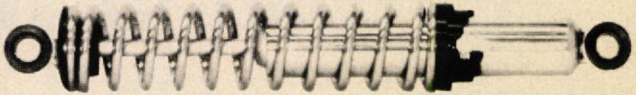

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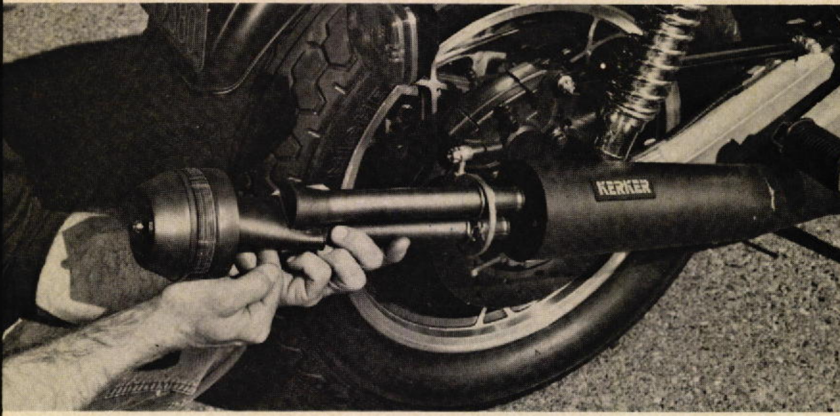

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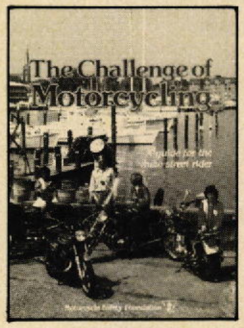
# Book Review

**THE CHALLENGE OF MOTORCYCLING**
**A guide for the new street rider**
**57 pages, $2.00**
**Developed and published by the**
**Motorcycle Safety Foundation**
**780 Elkridge Landing Road**
**Linthicum, Maryland 21090**



• Simplicity is a virtue in presenting a complex skill such as riding a motorcycle. A beginner has enough to consider without being dazzled by complicated wording or a barrage of statistics. "The Challenge of Motorcycling" by the Motorcycle Safety Foundation is a fine example of a simple yet thorough presentation of essential riding skills. In only 57 pages it covers preliminaries such as licensing, insurance, riding gear and getting used to the controls, then continues on to such advanced skills as foul-weather riding, skid control and handling mechanical emergencies.

Chapters one and two introduce the beginner to motorcycling and the machine, and by chapter three the riding begins. The remaining three chapters present more advanced riding skills in an easily understood manner. Each concept is built upon the previous one in a logical and thoughtful progression, with frequent reinforcement of each idea to highlight its importance. Photos and sketches are used throughout the book both to educate and entertain. Self-tests are a part of every chapter, so the reader can check for retention of important concepts and newly learned skills. Each chapter closes with a summary of major points.

Aside from being structured for an easy read, this book is also a bargain. For only two dollars you can recieve the collected wisdom of people who make a living helping others to ride safely. Though other books contain greater detail, new riders might be too impatient to absorb a more slow-moving tone, regardless of its quality. The MSF seems to recognize that the novice rider is likely to become over-zealous early in the learning process, so the information is presented quickly and simply—before the reader is compelled to put the book down and take off for a wobbly ride. Good thinking. Good book. —*Riley Tharp*

*Continued*

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shows that today's police radar is subject to **errors** and irregularities that can result in **undeserved** speeding tickets.

## HARD CASH

- Be careful. A study published in the Journal of Trauma revealed that motorcyclists involved in crashes require more **hospital** care per person than any other group of injured patients. The study was conducted at a British hospital and was based on twelve categories of **injuries.** So saving yourself from possible financial disaster is another good reason to keep the shiny side up when you ride.
- But even if you never **crash,** your bike is still getting **bashed.** Swedish highway engineer Bo Liljedahl has calculated that the cost of operating a vehicle on poorly maintained roads can be as much as 15% higher than when the vehicle is driven on properly paved roads. So, while **patching** roads reduces the money spent by highway authorities, it actually increases the total cost to society compared to proper **resurfacing.** Sounds like the definition of ad hoc.
- This could be the right time for you to rush out and get a great **deal** on a leftover 1980 motorcycle. According to the latest Motorcycle Industry Council figures, Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki and Yamaha collectively shipped more bikes to their dealers in 1980 than in 1979. But the **sales** of new machines fell below the 1979 level. More than 100,000 additional bikes were shipped to dealers last year, yet sales were 1.8% **below** 1979 levels. That means there are a lot of bikes sitting around waiting to be bought.
- It seems as if it's costing more and more to convince you to buy a new bike these days. Yamaha has announced a huge **increase** in its **advertising** budget for 1981. This year the tuning-fork factory will spend an estimated $14 million compared to $10 million last year. Watch for an upcoming report in Guide Lines telling you just how much you **subsidize** ads every time you buy a new motorcycle.

## AFTER THE FACT

- On page 72 of the April issue, we ran a product evaluation of **Roadman** boots. Since then, we have received a bunch of calls asking where to **order** them. Always ready to toe the line when it comes to reader requests, here's the info: Roadman, 666 Anderson Avenue, Cliffside Park, New Jersey 07010.
- The folks at A & B Fiberglass Productions called to point out a mistake in the Fairing Special Edition in the March issue. The **photos** of the A & B fairings on pages 95 and 97 should be **reversed.** The prices and descriptions, though, are correct.
- In the same issue (March 1981) we made an error that makes it seem as though the **Virago** is equipped with **variable-venturi** carbs. Not so. In spite of a reference to 36mm Hitachis on page 51, the mixers are actually 40mm as indicated on the spec page. Now we can breathe easier.

*Continued*

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# Off The Single Track

## *The care and propagation of new motorcycle species.*

• DEAR AGGIE: What should I do when my four-year-old asks me, "Mommy, where do motorcycles come from?" Do you think four is old enough to be told the details? Or should I gloss over the unseemly shaft-drive and awkward clutch control and just give him a lovely line of BS? Roy Jr. deserves to be told the truth; we just don't know how far we should go.

BEFUDDLED from Alabama

DEAR BEFUDDLED: Don't feel bad, honey. You're not the only one who's befuddled. As a matter of fact, your idea to give him a lovely line of BS suits me just fine. The truth simply doesn't paint a pretty picture. The plain fact is, although we have known for generations who the mother of (motorcycle) invention is, we have yet to discover its father. Yes, it's all a question of paternity. The legend, of course, has it that when there were only horses and bicycles, some crazy bastard (whoops—sorry) decided to strap an engine to his bicycle. It's a darn shame, but the father of motorcycle invention was probably not a family man.

Today, scholars are still trying to untangle this sticky problem of paternity. There are aberrations in any family tree, they remind us. In fact, some scholars believe that it is actually necessary that many outrageous bikes be created in order to spawn one really workable motorcycle. A case in point might be taken from the Motorcycle Safety Conference last May (1980) with the creation of two definitely curious examples of motorcycle lineage: the pre-production prototype pendulum-stabilized motorcycle from Bright Engineering, Inc. and what is called the crash-safe motorcycle from the Convair Division of General Dynamics Corporation.

To start, we can assume the two bikes are not related, since their family names derive from two distinct branches: Motocyclia dementia and Motocyclia inanius. The first bike—Motoproto pendulus—has three wheels, two of which are parallel, widely spaced front wheels. It is an obvious hybrid. The Motoproto leans as a conventional single-track, yet steers and tracks as a multiple-track. Its on-board pendulum, which makes leaning automatic, demonstrates the machine's hybrid vigor.

In discussing the hypothesis for this test-tube miracle, scientists cited improved safety from both motorcycle and motorcyclist. "A safe motorcycle must provide all requisite safety capabilities that are not provided by the average, competent motorcyclist." It is expected, they say, that there will be lapses of ability, and that furthermore, such lapses should be predictable. The hybrid nature of the new bike is an effort on the part of its makers to solve what are to them the design deficiencies of the single-tracker (e.g., reverse steering, brake lock-up, the effects of tire blowout or road surface vehicle control instability of the various modes—capsize, wobble & weave; load variation and distribution effects, inability to react to transient roll moment and lack of conspicuity). The bike's two-wheeled front end definitely renders the motorcycle conspicuous. Its front suspension is significant in benefitting the primary motorcycle characteristics of leaning in turns, as it balances centrifugal forces with gravitational forces. Yet its pendulum provides the stability of a multitrack. Bright's "Braking to Speeds Below c.8km/hr While Leaning into Stops" test, left some room for doubt in this examiner's mind, however. In the midst of a tight turn, "there occurred loss of operator ability to return the vehicle to vertical by steering." The rider found himself mounted on a stopped motorcycle, forcing him to dismount and lift the bike up again. This discovery, they said at Bright, was "very amusing to the other test riders." So, if you take your riding seriously, this is not the bike for you.

Perhaps, then the second test-tube innovation—Motocrassius safiens—would fill the bill for a really serious rider. Its outstanding design features include a door that serves as a side stand, an anti-somersault front end (no laughs with this bike), and a seat and restraint that move forward with the rider during frontal collisions with a spring that pulls the seat and restraint back to its original position. Last but not least is the bike's padded, folding handlebar.

There can be no doubt as to the rationale behind such a bike: You will crash. The job of the crash-resistant motorcycle is to protect against all fatal or disabling injuries to motorcyclists—a serious objective if there ever were one. Best of all, its innovators claim, are the psychological advantages to friends and relatives of motorcyclists: no more stress. And in a world full of problems and expensive shrinks, who can think of a better panacea? It makes an especially imaginative gift suggestion for next Mother's Day.

Well, BEFUDDLED, I seem to have got off the track a bit. Perhaps the old adage "A picture's worth a thousand words" will work for your son. Just in case, I'm sending along a couple of glossies. If these babies don't clam him up for awhile, nothing will.

Sincerely, AGGIE

*—Merry MacTavish*

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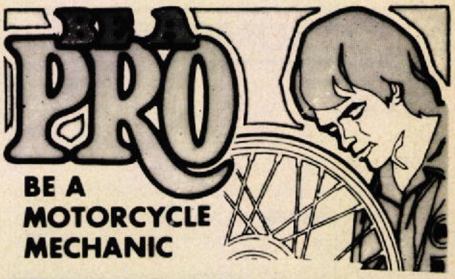

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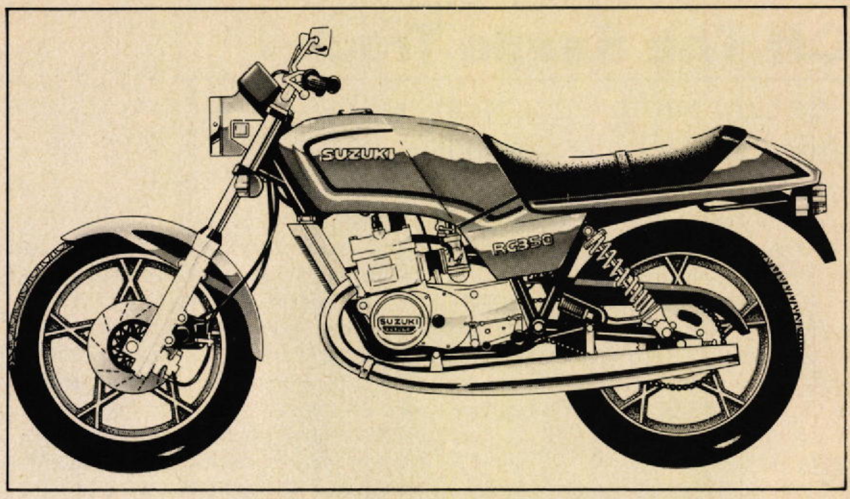
## *RUMORBIKE:*
## Suzuki RG350

### *Is this Suzuki's salvo on the RD350LC?*



© 1981 MARK WAGNER

**Will Suzuki produce the RG350 to counter the successful Yamaha RD350LC?**

*Street racers would be the winners in a Suzuki/Yamaha water pistol fight.*

• The battle of the pocket rockets could be about to resume. Suzuki is rumored to be ready to introduce its answer to the Yamaha RD350LC, which you saw tested in the December 1980 issue. Suzuki certainly has the experience to build a refined street two-stroker, as witnessed by its smooth and quiet three-cylinder machines from the seventies. By applying that same experience to a high-performance sport bike, Suzuki could give Yamaha a real run at the street-racer class.

The RG350, aptly named after Suzuki's successful roadracers, is claimed to have a bore and stroke of 62mm x 57mm, with a dry weight of around 325 pounds. Assuming that the bike is targeted at the RD350LC, it will probably produce about 35 hp, and will be capable of sub-14-second quarter-mile times.

The frustrating unknown is whether the RG350 will ever be imported to the U.S. There is little doubt that the technology exists to enable the bike to conform to EPA regulations, but the cost of compliance could prove prohibitive. Or, if the Reagan administration decides that current EPA regulations on motorcycles are not cost-effective, the standards could be eased enough for the RG to be imported.

One thing is certain. If and when Europe gets the RG350, there will be plenty of smugglers waiting to bring one home.

*—Riley Tharp*

## RUMORS

• If all the new machinery in the dealer showrooms still can't excite you, then you should look to the future for bikes that are rumored to be coming. Yamaha is said to be preparing to launch an **attack** on the Kawasaki GPz550 with a hyper version of the Seca 550. The **Seca** could receive larger carbs, valves and trick cams to bump its power into warp drive. Chassis changes in the way of adjustable suspension and a beefier swingarm would probably accompany such a re-think.

• **V-four** engines are also the subject of recent re-think, with Suzuki rumored to be the main proponent of the design. Sources say that **Suzuki** is readying a one-liter, V-four tourer to go head-to-head with the Honda Interstate.

• Another V-engined rumorbike is equipped with some pretty **strange** specifications. Honda might soon unveil a **V-five** machine for Europe and the U.S. A bank of three cylinders leans forward and a bank of two cylinders fits nicely between the rider's legs. The bike could be intended to put Honda back on top in the **performance** wars.

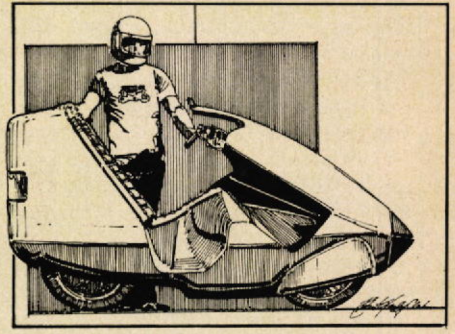
• Improved performance could come from other kinds of unusual designs, as well. **Graphite-fiber,** a type of ultra-light and strong plastic with controlled grain structure, might be used to produce hyperbikes with the bulk of small commuterbikes. Sources say that one of the Japanese Four, perhaps Honda, is preparing a featherweight 750 with hyperbike performance. Extensive use of the **exotic** fibers in the engine and chassis is said to reduce the weight to around **400 pounds.**

• Saving weight can certainly yield greater performance, but so does the old standby method of more and more **power.** And an old power-squeezing idea is back in the news. Recent work on **supercharging** by Bendix has some people speculating that blowers could overtake turbos in the near future. While the absolute gain in power is less than with turbocharging, power **boosts** of 30–40 percent are easily attained. Superchargers deliver instant throttle response and installation doesn't require special or complex exhaust plumbing. That's a big **advantage** because of the limited space available on a bike. A supercharger could be mounted behind the cylinders of a transverse four (directly below the carbs) and would simply fill a formerly unused space. A short, toothed **belt** to the crankshaft could drive the unit. Backers of this rumor say it's an idea that has returned at the right time.

• New and almost-new ideas abound in motocross suspension design, and a recent rumor has **Kawasaki** employing old fashioned auto-think to create a **trick** rear suspension. **Torsion bars** are used instead of coil springs. Torsion bars are worth noting because they deliver progressive-rate springing and can be very **compact.** If a torsion bar could be contained as part of the swingarm pivot, the bike might appear to have no rear suspension at all. The work is said to be primarily on motocross machines, with **street** application still well into the future.

## APART FROM THE CROWD

• Craig **Vetter** has always done things his own way. The Triumph Hurricane, the Windjammer and the Mystery Ship are some Vetter **originals** from the past. And now his latest project is about to be completed.



**Craig Vetter sculpts a Streamliner.**

*A mix of Dimaxion and dirigible.*

This could be the most **radical** Vetter creation so far. It's called the Streamliner, and it's a single-seat, bullet-shaped tourer with a reclining seating position. With a 250cc engine and seven gallons of on-board fuel, the bike is claimed to have a **cruising range** of 875 miles. That's 125 mpg. If this is true, then it is certainly stranger than fiction. Vetter claims there are no plans to go beyond the prototype stage with the Streamliner. And you were worried. •

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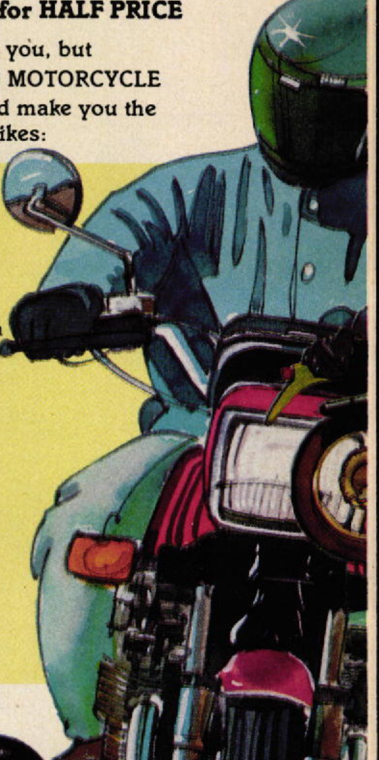

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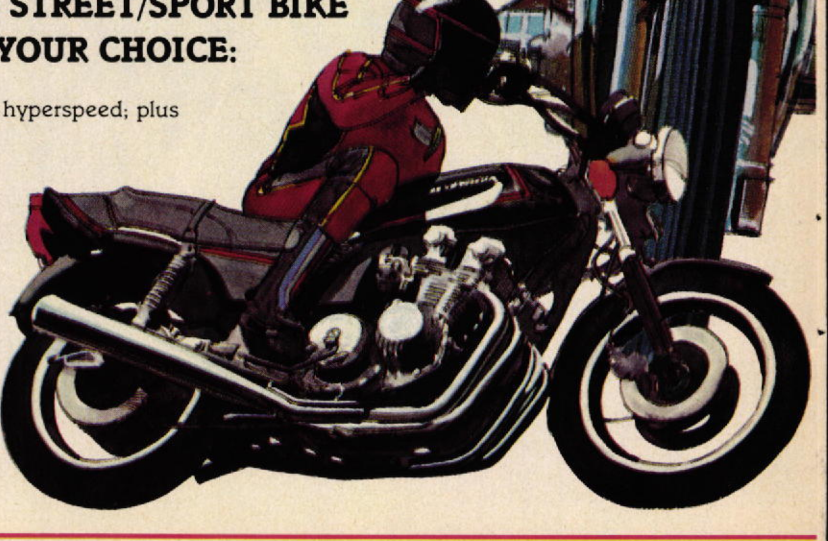

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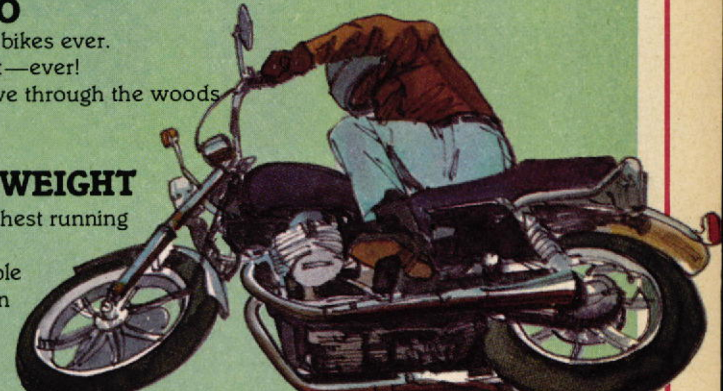

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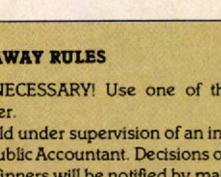

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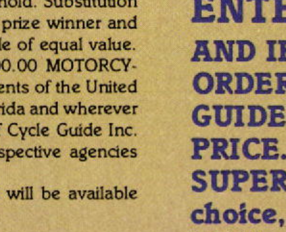

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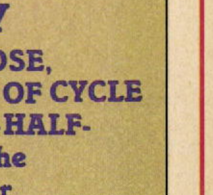

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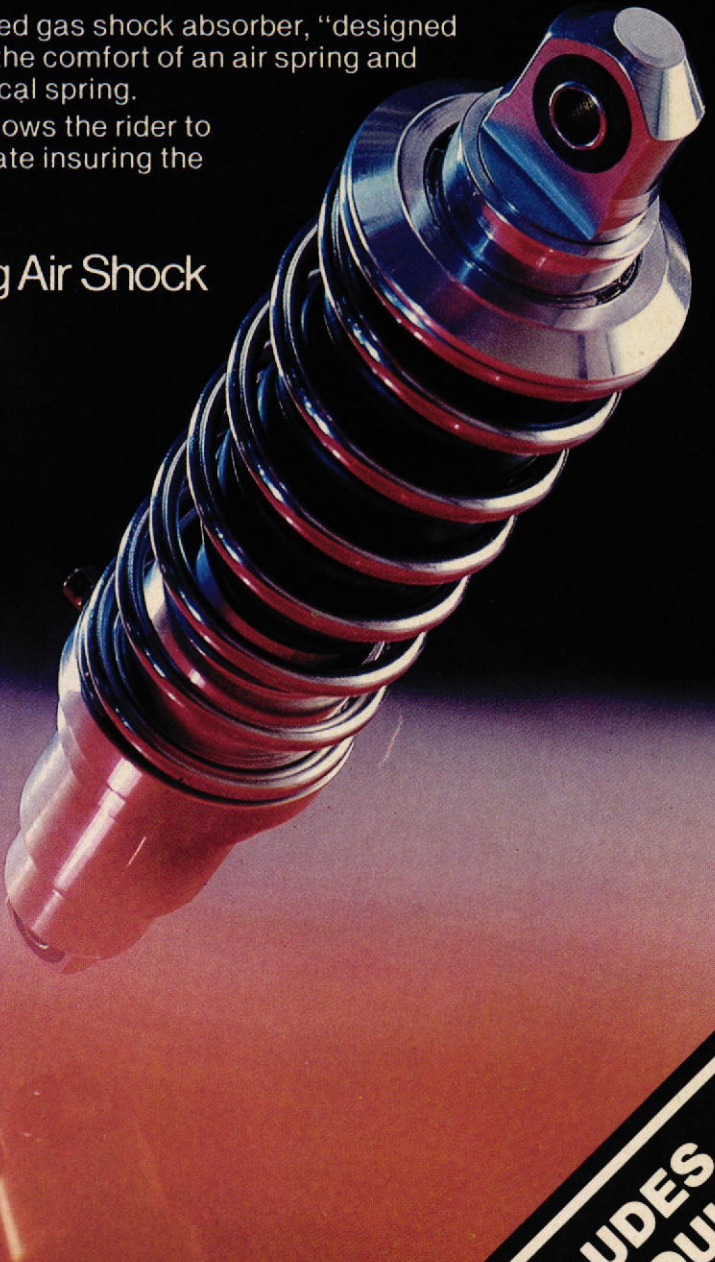

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## COMPARISON ROAD TEST:

# 750 Showdown

## HONDA CB750F, KAWASAKI KZ750, SUZUKI GS750EX, YAMAHA 750 SECA

*Turning back the covers on the sleeper class.*

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 VIC HUBER

BY LARRY WORKS

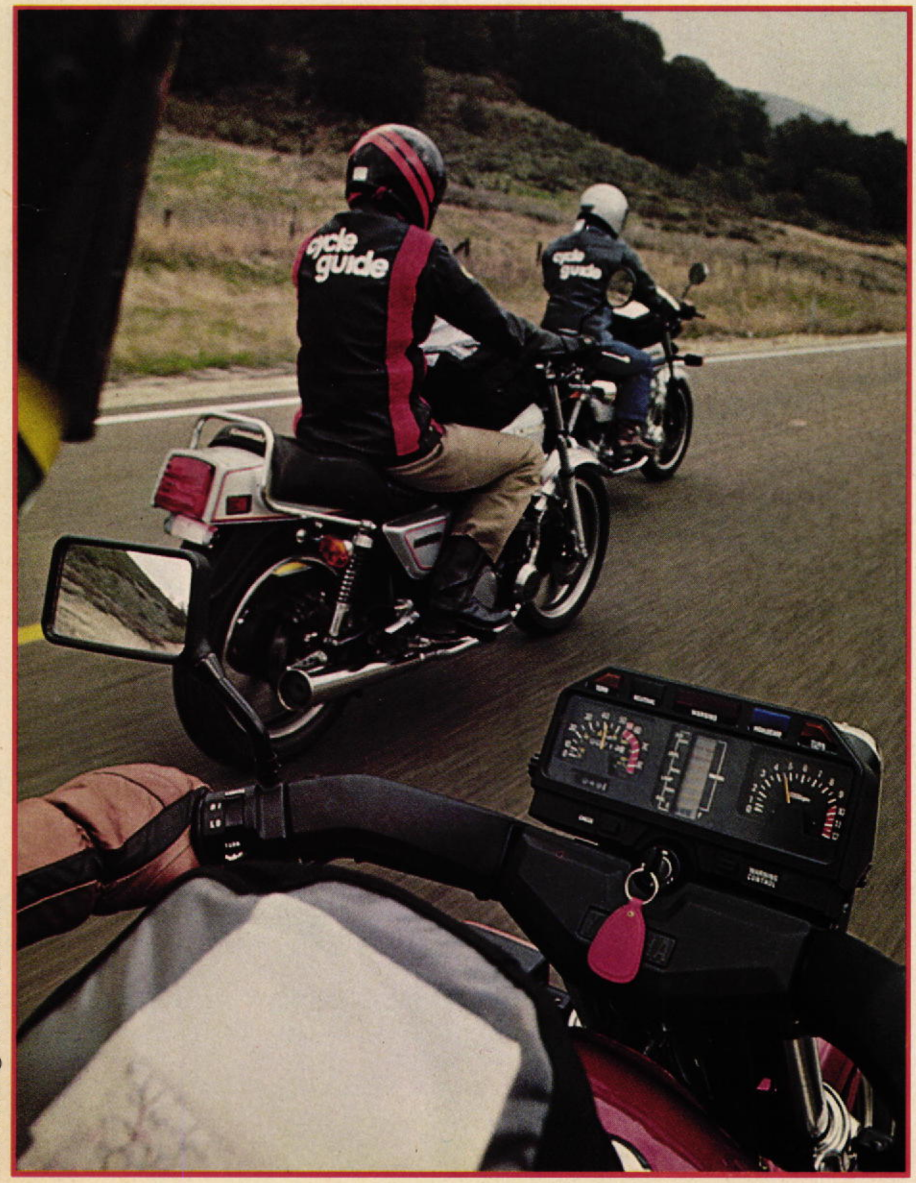
The hyperbikes descended on the 750 class like a new Ice Age, chilling the street bike climate overnight and freezing the *prima donna* 750 into extinction. Quirky, sullen or temperamental 750s departed like the dinosaur, into time. It didn't matter that they were the fastest production motorcycles of their era. The hyperbikes were faster.

So the 750s went to work for a living, which turned the 750 class into the most hotly-contested consumer's market going. They're literally only a tick of the stopwatch away from the literbikes in terms of sheer Fast, and hundreds—sometimes thousands—of dollars less expensive to buy and insure. But in a sleeper class like the 750s, you don't just quote pricetags and quarter-mile times to find the best. You talk *performance*. Anything and everything, from high-level commuter traffic tag to cruising for stares to full-on touring gets thrown at the 750s—and they're still expected to go like hell when you twist the throttle.

Each manufacturer approaches the 750 class from a different angle of attack and from a different speed. A quick check of the altogether different appeal of Yamaha's glitzy Seca 750 and Kawasaki's stripped-for-action KZ750 tells you that—and also something about what you want in a street bike. And if neither one punches *your* button, there are also Honda's not-long-from-the-track CB750F and Suzuki's suave GS750EX to complete the choice in this confrontation.

But shootouts are more than just fashion contests. You have to peel back the surface to find out which bike does what best—and which doesn't. We did. Day-in-day-out urbo-slogging, high-speed Sunday morning canyon-bending and a tankbag sport tour went into the testing—and that was before we took them to the racetrack to test the outer limits of their performance. As different as they are, they're all good, amazingly so. But there *is* a winner. One of these bikes will go as far as you want, as fast and as hard as you want to ride it. But like the cover says, you'd never guess which one.

*Continued*



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 DAVID DEWHURST

You probably heard a familiar sound when the first 750 Seca rolled off of the assembly line. The noise might have been familiar, but maybe you couldn't place it. What you heard was the distinctive "clack" of a pile of chips dropping onto a felt tabletop. The 750-class ante had just been upped.

The bet was against three fours—the CB750F, KZ750 and GS750EX—but the project planners at Yamaha had to figure that the Seca was a pat hand. Its strong suit is perceived value, the sense that you're getting a lot of motorcycle for your money. The cards that went into Yamaha's hand are easy to figure. If you know what to look for, they're dealt straight up.

Into a 750 market where the chief players have been in the game with the same cards, by and large, for a couple of hands, Yamaha dropped a wild card with the only shaft drive in the pack. Add to that final-drive difference a radical styling job that rivets your attention, the first production anti-dive front suspension on a motorcycle for U.S. sale and an LCD instrument package that looks like a giant step into the future, and it's hard not to start taking side bets on the outcome. That's a strong hand as is, but Yamaha's Seca entered the 750 game with a lucky rabbit's foot, just for insurance: the best 750 quarter-mile time.

Since the game looked so interesting, we naturally dealt ourselves in. And since it's always smart to know who or what you're playing against, we took a closer look at the players. Underneath all the trappings, the hand didn't seem to be as one-sided as we'd first thought. In fact, the Seca's sales features notwithstanding, the four 750s are

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more alike than they are different.

To start with, all four are powered by four-cylinder transverse vertical engines with double overhead cams and five-speed gearboxes. Each of the engines fires with the aid of an electronic ignition, and none of them has a kickstarter. All four engines have four-into-two exhaust systems, and each is bolted into a mild steel, double-downtube frame. Suspension for each bike consists of an air-spring fork and twin shocks that are adjustable for both preload and damping. Non-wire wheels, H-rated tires and quartz-halogen headlamps are standard equipment.

At this point, the edges of the similarities between the bikes begins to blur, but the general outline remains intact. All four 750s have constant-vacuum carburetors, but Honda adds an accelerator pump to quicken throttle response. The Honda's ComStar wheels are composite units assembled from separate pieces; the wheels on the other three bikes are cast. With the exception of the Seca, which has twin disc brakes at its fork and a rod-operated drum rear brake, the comparison bikes are all halted by triple disc brakes. Three of the four—the Seca is odd bike out again—have chain final drive. And slicing broad engine design philosophies down the middle, the Seca and KZ750 employ two valves per cylinder, while each cylinder on the GS750EX and CB750F has four valves.

But if it sounds to you that this comparison of likenesses means that this is a head-to-head of near-clones, forget it. The effort that each manufacturer went to in catering to a different segment of the 750 audience puts a bullet into that argument.

Yamaha took the hang-tough look of the Maxim and transformed it into the highest of Hi-Tech. The redecoration included a wraparound taillight, padded handlebar, rectangular headlamp mounted over a smaller rectangular fog lamp, an unmistakably new-design LCD instrument cluster, anti-dive fork (see related instrument and fork stories on following pages) and enough visual competition between the smoothly radiused curves and sharp angles to qualify the Seca as the first New Wave motorcycle around. Not Punk, but unlike anything that's gone before. There doesn't seem to be much middle ground on the Seca's look; you either love it or loathe it—but when one goes by you *notice*.

If the Seca's styling seems like something from the day after tomorrow, the engineering seems far more familiar. Last year's Maxim 650 was the engine model for the Seca. A displacement boost accomplished by increasing the bore 2mm and lengthening the stroke 4mm brought the engine into the 750 class, but the basic design comes straight from the 650. What keeps the cases on both 650 and 750 downsized is that the AC generator is mounted behind the bank of cylinders rather than being hung at the end of the crankshaft. Even the carburetors—a bank of 32mm Hitachis—are common to both bikes, and the valve trains, which are adjusted via the same external shims, use the same intake and exhaust valves. Cams and cam timing are different, though, with the Seca having four degrees more intake cam duration and 14 degrees more overlap than the 650. All internal gear ratios are the same for both Maxim and Seca, but the 750's larger 18-inch rear wheel gives it an eight-mph top speed advantage over the 650.

Aside from the pistons, rods and crank necessary to make the displacement change, the Yamaha Induction Control System (YICS) is the major difference between the Seca and Maxim engines. The system is designed to promote more-complete combustion by injecting a small additional fuel charge into each cylinder through small sub-ports connecting all four main inlet ports. The charge enters the combustion chamber at a speed and angle calculated to make it swirl, theoretically improving combustion.

Tote up what the Seca has to offer, and you have a wide array of flash and dazzle. But at the other end of the superbike scale, the KZ offers barely a hint of trickery. In the KZ's case, what you see is what there is. Kawasaki engineers also drew on an existing model when they designed the KZ750 for its introduction last year. By increasing the bore of the KZ650 by 4mm, bumping the diameter of both the inlet and exhaust valves and increasing valve lift and duration, they netted a 19-percent horsepower increase. And through a strict no-frills program of weight reduction that included deleting the KZ650's kickstarter, they sliced 12 pounds off of the 650, producing a 750 that is the concentrated essence of a modern four-cylinder superbike. At 471 pounds, the KZ has an almost incredible 55-pound weight advantage over the Honda, 54 pounds on the Suzuki and 24 pounds on the Yamaha. In concept it's a mini Z-1, boiled down to muscle and bone, with nothing added that detracts from its hot-rod image.

*Continued*

Far from the glitter of the Seca and the professional, almost drab look of the KZ750, the Honda's long, low lines suggest high-speed excitement straight from the racetrack. Just sitting in the driveway, it looks as if it were in the pits at Le Mans for a rider change. Revved up, it *sounds* like it. Despite its sheer heft, the F still has the best power-to-weight ratio of the bunch. Since its 1979 introduction when CYCLE GUIDE picked the F-type as the best-handling superbike around, additional frame gusseting, needle bearings at the swingarm, better suspension and twin-piston brakes have only made it better.

When the re-engineered 16-valve GS750E made its debut last year, smooth lines, smooth engine response and cushy suspension immediately labeled it as a borderline sportbike. It was in the hunt thanks to a strong engine, but too-soft shocks limited the Suzuki to making owners content with a comfortable highway ride, a quiet exhaust note and the best seat in the 750 class. The 1981 EX maintained last year's strong points, including its subtle look of refinement, but Suzuki spent the off-season solving the GS's major shortcomings by pumping up its suspension at both ends.

Listing styles and features is all well and good, but it isn't nearly enough to start lining up the bikes for the finish. All it really hints at is what kind of motorcycle appeals to you. To pick a winner, you've got to put each bike through its paces, back to back, to find which one does what best. Each of these 750s is designed to perform best in one area—sometimes at the expense of performance in other riding modes—so the only kind of testing that can be meaningful has to include all the different kinds of riding that each motorcycle might be put through.

The testing program for the 750s included weeks of stoplight-to-stoplight commuting, hundreds of freeway miles, regular assaults on favorite twisty roads and a high-speed tankbag tour that covered 6000-foot elevation changes, 85-mph winds, rain, sleet, snow, fog, gloom of night and every kind of road surface—wet and dry—that you're likely to ride on. And some that you're not. After that, we put them on Willow Springs Raceway (see racetrack story on page 37) to stretch each bike's performance envelope to its limit. And then they went through the clocks at Orange County International Raceway to tell us which one was quickest. At the end of the test, we had subjected the bikes to a motorcycle microcosm, a brutal, concentrated slice of the kind of riding that any of these bikes might see in its useful life.

The back-and-forth of commuting offered up few surprises. Since none of the 750s was pushed anywhere near its limits, it served as more or less a get-acquainted period. To no one's surprise, the Seca was high on the list of bikes to scoot around town on. The saddle of the trickest 750 in the bunch was definitely the place to be seen. The F, too, drew its share of stares, especially when the racy whine of the quick-revving motor spat through the exhaust pipes. If there was any ambient raciness in anyone piloting the F, the Honda's sensory input and low-effort handling brought it to the surface. Kawasaki's 750 elicited a little street-racer response, too, but it had nothing to do with its looks or sounds. In the saddle of the KZ, testers quickly mastered the tactics of guerilla urboriding, blipping from corner to corner, waiting until the last millisecond to flick the KZ through one 90-degree turn and onto the next. Compared to the rest of the pack, the GS became the motorcycle to take when a rider didn't particularly want to lead a parade of the curious, and wasn't ready to play street racer. It quickly turned into the street bike we craved when we were a little frazzled, a way to get from here to there with no surprises.

But if the commuter riding didn't do much to sort out which 750 was best, it did show that each had its merits. Any of these superbikes will tame surface streets with little effort. Favorites were already beginning to emerge, but it took hammering the Superslab to bring things into focus.

From the start, the GS was the odds-on favorite for high-speed highway riding. With its suspension set on full-soft, the Suzuki seemed to swallow any and all pavement irregularities whole without buffeting the rider. Even with the fork and shock settings adjusted to sporting mode, the GS provided progressive suspension response and the highest comfort quotient of the group. Much of that plush feel can be traced straight back to the GS's wide, soft saddle. The seating position on the Suzuki is the most upright of the 750s, but with no dips, lips or ridges in the seat, there's nothing to stop you from readjusting your position now and then. The long wheelbase contributes to a stable high-speed ride, even in heavy sidewinds, and the throttle response at speed is quick—our GS ran a close second to the KZ in top-gear roll-ons—without being jerky.

Second place on the Interstate went to the Honda, which for 1981 had its fork and shocks recalibrated for a softer freeway ride. Triple-rate springs in the fork and slightly softer compression damping helped the Honda soak up bumps and pavement ripples better than any previous

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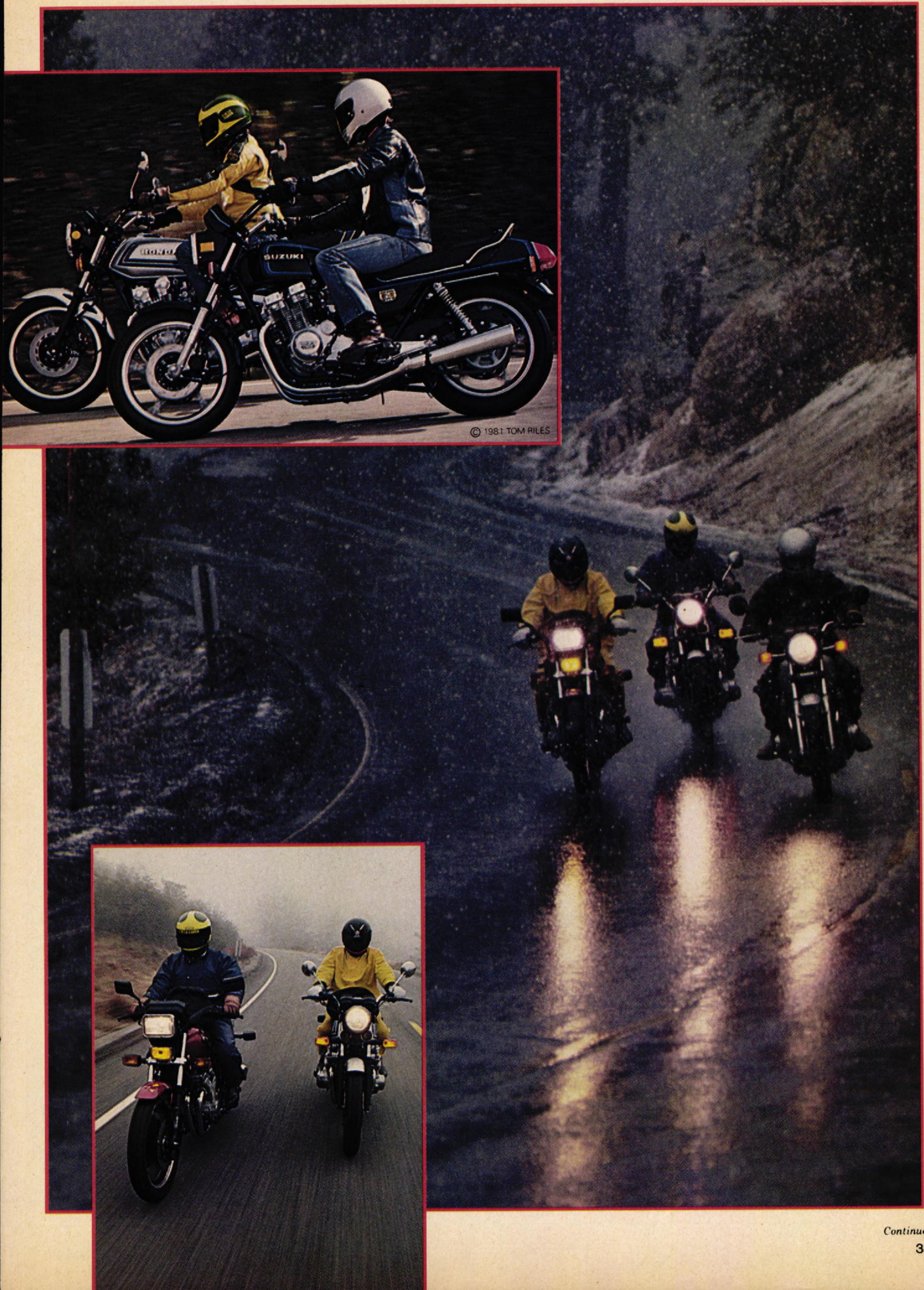
HONDA
SUZUKI

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*Continued*

# Welcome to the Willow Springs Laboratory

• We think of Willow Springs Raceway as a laboratory. Of course, neither the rattlesnake-infested scrub around the track nor our multicolored leather lab coats are commonly associated with the scientific method. Yet at Willow, far from the antics of feeble-minded grannies in pastel T-birds, we can safely extend a bike to its limits and inspect its handling characteristics. We do this because we figure that sooner or later, by inclination or by necessity, you will want to know how your bike performs in extreme circumstances, whether it's passing a truck, avoiding a patch of gravel or just taking a Sunday ride. That's also why qualitative behavior is more important than lap times in our laboratory. Especially in the case of this shootout.

As it does with each of our 750s, the test track amplifies the Kawasaki's personality, it doesn't change it. A short-coupled wheelbase and quick steering geometry give the KZ the agility best suited for negotiating tight and winding roads (although the bike feels somewhat top-heavy in slow corners). When the suspension is dialed to the full-soft street mode, however, it can't cope with abrupt inputs. The rear tire feels skittish and a bump in the middle of a corner will provoke a sudden lurch from the bike at slow speeds, or a mild wiggle at faster speeds. With the suspension firmed up, the lurch is minimized, but the rear end still walks from side-to-side at speed. Perhaps the bike's greatest asset is its engine, which provides plenty of forward thrust no matter how many rpm are showing on the tach.

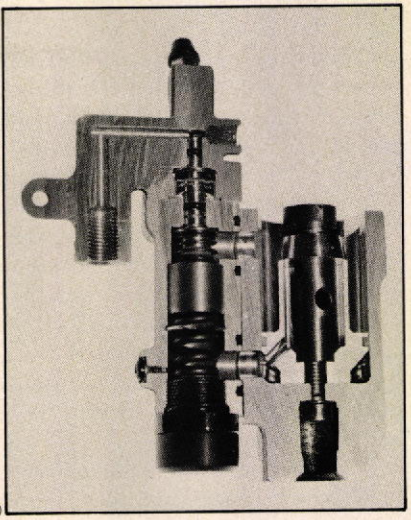
The 750 Seca doesn't show the same willingness to seek the speeds within reach of its engine. At street suspension settings, the Seca wallows and plunges, the undercarriage striking sparks from the pavement. Firmer settings reduced the wallow at the price of substantial harshness, but the burnished exhaust headers and mutilated foot pegs attest to a significant lack of ground clearance. More importantly, the shaft-drive Seca doesn't relish sudden maneuvers. As the rear end squats under deceleration, the Seca's slow steering becomes even less responsive and lots of body english is required to heel the bike over for a corner. Then, as you speed toward the exit, the steering gets very light and the rear tire's grip on the pavement feels tenuous. Furthermore, the Seca seems easily confused by simultaneous braking and cornering inputs. It wants to sit up when the brakes are applied, and the rear drum's tendency to lock amplifies the problem. When you treat the Seca very deliberately, thinking ahead and selecting your line carefully, it proves to be quite stable. But any attempt to flick it back and forth simply confuses the issue.

This Honda CB750F didn't take much of a liking to our laboratory either, strangely enough. Neutral handling makes quick transitions effortless, while the combination of extraordinarily controllable brakes and precise steering enables you to really charge the corners, even if the front tire doesn't feel quite up to the task. But once this particular bike passed an apex, trouble started. On soft suspension settings, the rear end pogoed up and down in an unseemly fashion, forcing the F-type wide of its line. With stiffer settings, the rear end improved in slower corners but grew worse in faster ones. A longitudinal seam in the pavement provoked a sudden twitch from the rear end, while in fast corners the bike simply wobbled. Since expeditions to Willow Springs with previous CB750Fs failed to uncover this nasty behavior, we suspect our test bike is flawed in some significant way. We've asked Honda to investigate.

No excuses are necessary for the Suzuki GS750E, however. It flat kicks ass. To be sure, it feels a little clumsy at slow speeds as it strokes up and down on its suspension, absorbing the bumps. Yet even though the undercarriage touches down as a result, the GS never strays from the line or worries its rider. Once the suspension is dialed to speed settings, the GS hugs the ground and sprints at top speed without a hint of wasted motion. With the second-best brakes, the best tires, plus steady and predictable handling, the GS hammers into corners effortlessly, both ends of the bike working in harmony. Then the engine powers the GS out of the corners as strongly as the Kawasaki, and far more quietly. The measure of the bike's goodness lies in its ability to generate 10 mph more speed out of a corner than its rival 750s with half the effort from the rider.

It's not easy to draw the bottom line to these laboratory results, but some generalizations can be made. The nimble Kawasaki, for example, relishes forceful riding and crooked roads. The Seca's slow reactions restrict it to highways where the corners are fast but few. For all the flaws of this unit, the CB750F feels dazzling when rapid transitions are called for. As for the GS750EX, well, it doesn't care what kind of tarmac it encounters. We've acknowledged the GS750 as the comfort-quotient king in the past, but now we believe it handles with the best in the 750 class. *—Michael Jordan*

# Anti-Dive: A Brake With Suspension Tradition


© 1981 DAVID DEWHURST

• Street motorcycles share little with Grand Prix roadrace machinery, but the anti-dive suspension system on the 750 Seca is an exception. It's an idea originally conceived for use on Kenny Roberts' World Championship-winning roadracers, and Yamaha feels that the benefits it offered him on the track can also help you on the street.

You might not realize the advantages of anti-dive front suspension, however, if you've never considered what happens without it: Under heavy braking, the front fork compresses, often right up to the point of bottoming. This is the result of forward weight transfer as the front wheel tries to stop while inertia makes the rest of the machine want to keep going. Moreover, the rear suspension usually fully extends at the same time, yielding a low-front, high-rear attitude that drastically alters the bike's steering geometry. Both the steering head angle and the trail are greatly reduced, and that, in turn, reduces straight-line stability at a time when you need all of it you can get.

Obviously, an anti-dive device would work wonders for this problem. But neither the Seca's system nor any other can significantly *reduce* weight transfer, because that is an unavoidable by-product of stopping governed by the immutable laws of physics. Instead, an anti-dive tries to reduce the *effects* of weight transfer. And the Seca's system does so by hydraulically limiting the fork's travel when the front brake is applied.

That little trick is accomplished by interconnecting the Seca's front-brake hydraulics with those of the fork's damper units. Each of the fork's slider legs has a special housing cast into its exterior just below the brake caliper. And inside of the housing is the secret to the anti-dive, a simple valve that, through special plumbing that leads both to the caliper and to the damping chamber of the fork, has brake fluid operating on one side of it and fork oil on the other.

During normal riding, the valve is held open by spring pressure so the fork oil can flow unrestricted through conventional damper holes inside the slider, thus the fork performs just like any other. But when the front brake is applied, the pressure of the brake fluid on the other side of the valve forces it closed, effectively cutting off the path for the damping oil. There's a small bleeder hole in the damper rod to allow minimal compression, but essentially, the fork is hydraulically locked. This prevents front-end dive so the bike can maintain normal steering geometry during heavy braking.

If there's a glitch in this anti-dive scheme, it's that having a hydraulically locked (read: rigid) front suspension during full-on braking isn't such a great idea. There needs to be *some* compliance in the event the bike hits a sizable bump or hole, otherwise the wheel could have trouble staying on the road or, worse yet, the increase in hydraulic pressure caused by bashing into a really big pothole could cause the slider to be fractured. That's why Yamaha has equipped the Seca's system with a blow-off valve. It consists simply of spring-loading the seat against which the anti-dive valve presses during front-wheel braking. So when the fork receives a sharp blow, the hydraulic pressure in the damping oil rises enough to force the seat away from the valve, allowing much freer fork movement. The point at which this valve unseats can even be adjusted by turning a screw in the base of the anti-dive unit, which alters the preload on the seat's spring.

Of course, having a relief valve also means that when the braking gets *extremely* aggressive—like during a panic stop or while slowing for a turn roadrace-style—the sheer magnitude of the weight transfer can unseat the valve and let the front end dive. And it is this sort of suspension conflict that engineers of future anti-dives will have to resolve. But for now, Yamaha is to be applauded for its efforts to make the unpredictable act of stopping a little safer. The Seca might be the first production bike introduced in the U.S. to have an anti-dive, but rest assured that it won't be the last.

*—David Dewhurst*

*Continued*

F, but its long-distance capabilities were still cut short by footpegs that are too high, producing a cramped riding position that put all of the rider's weight on his inside thighs. One hundred miles of freeway riding on the F, which has the greatest range of any of the 750s, was sure to produce a case of numbutt. The condition was advanced by the fact that the F turned about 300 rpm faster than any of the other 750s at 60 mph. As a result, the Honda's freeway ride felt a little nervous, as if it were itching to scratch through some twisties.

A choppy freeway ride put the Seca into third, perhaps caused by the relatively high unsprung weight of the shaft drive. Ride quality also suffered from a fork that resisted movement over sharp bumps and stiff shock action. A well-shaped but too-hard seat compounded the problem by passing the jolts to the rider, but the one-shot riding position is canted forward slightly and lets the rider flex with the shock rather than soaking it all up through the spine. Vibration from the solidly-mounted engine got noticeable through the tank and seat at about 5000 rpm, smack in the middle of fast cruising speeds, but it never made it all the way to objectionable. What got unpleasant, though, was the way drivers in the lanes beside the Seca paced its speed, craning their necks to get a better look; perhaps they'll get their fill of gawking as Secas become more common on the road.

The KZ drew last for long-distance riding. Hampered at the task by its stiff suspension and the shortest wheelbase in the group, the KZ also lost comfort points for its thin, hard seat. Small rider inputs translated into immediate direction changes, which made the KZ the most tiring of the 750s on the straight-and-boring. Vibration from the handlebar, seat and footpegs were reminders of the KZ's hot-rod nature, as was any fifth-gear roll-on. The KZ's engine always felt the torquiest, and any big handful of throttle on the Superslab met with results as predictable as a calendar. Following some initial driveline lurch, the Kawasaki pulled the Suzuki by a bike length and simply sucked the Seca and F in its wake.

Miles of freeway aligned the 750s pretty much as we had expected, but as the highway turned into two-lane and then into winding, empty stretches punctuated by hard corners, pavement ripples and decreasing-radius surprises, some unexpected talent showed through.

At the head of a fairly tight pack was the Honda, slicing through high-speed S-turns with a low transition effort that gave no clues to its high weight. Long sweepers at high ground speed produced a stable feeling, even over bumps and holes, yet the F changed lines willingly on command. Riders could charge deep into corners, grab onto the best brakes of any of the four 750s and exit hard. The only thing that kept the Honda from leaving the other 750s behind was a fussy, imprecise gearbox that wouldn't downshift cleanly. Even with slow, deliberate shifts, our F produced more than its share of false neutrals, missed shifts and frustration.

The big surprise in the twisties was the Suzuki. Once we got used to its remote feel and its tendency to move around on its suspension a lot, we found that the GS tracked cleanly over almost any road surface. Even when the GS grounded a pipe or footpeg—a fairly frequent occurrence in spirited cornering—it didn't lose its unflappable sense of calm. On hard, low-speed turns we paid the price of the long wheelbase with some extra effort required to heel the Suzuki over, but most of the time we could ride the GS fast without turning our normal riding styles into an exercise in moto-gymnastics.

As long as the road was smooth, the Kawasaki was right in with the Honda and Suzuki. But on uneven pavement, the KZ's cornering lines turned fragile. The KZ will flick side-to-side easily like a much smaller bike, and it's got the torquey engine to guarantee a high exit speed out of almost any turn, in any gear, but even a small change in rider attitude or the road surface when it's heeled over will set the KZ into a side-to-side dance that requires corrections to bring it back on line. Stickier tires and more-compliant suspension combined with the KZ's engine and low weight would make the Kawasaki a back-road stalker.

Slow, hard steering and a lack of ground clearance kept the Seca in sight of but at the back of the pack in the canyons. Torque reaction from its shaft drive made the Yamaha jack up and down on its suspension with abrupt throttle changes, and rendered the Seca only semi-willing to corner hard. A throttle-chop when the Seca was into a turn was met with the graunch of metal and pavement as it sank on its suspension and a footpeg or exhaust pipe touched down. In fast corners the Seca steered with lean, not the handlebar, and the rear end wanted to hang to the outside of a turn. Cornering BMW-style—trailing the rear brake a bit—extracted the Seca's best handling.

By the time we got to the racetrack, the Suzuki looked like a strong first-place candidate. We expected that Willow Springs

*Continued*

## Charting the Changes

### HONDA CB750F

**Suspension:** Fork-tube diameter increased from 35mm to 37mm. Fork-oil capacity increased. Initial fork spring rate increased while final rate remains the same. Variable Hydraulic Damping (VHD) shocks replace Full Variable Quality (FVQ) units. Rebound damping rates slightly increased. Shock spring made of new alloy for longer service life.

**Brakes:** New twin-piston calipers act on redesigned discs. New front master cylinder is six ounces lighter than last year's.

**Tires:** Front tire size increased from 3.25H19 to 3.50H19. Rear increased from 4.00H18 to 4.25H18. Rear rim width also increased from 2.15 in. to 2.50 in.

**Dimensions and Capacities:** Fork span (center-to-center distance between fork tubes) increased from 182mm to 192mm. Handlebar mount boss relocated on upper fork clamp to a position 10mm higher than and 10mm rearward of last year's location point.

**Details:** New vacuum petcock with reserve position. Small spoiler added to front fender. Rear-lighted instrument faces have translucent numbers for improved night visibility. New graphics on tank, sidecover and tail section.

**Price:** Increased $150 to $2998.

### KAWASAKI KZ750

**Suspension:** New boss on rear spring preload collar for easier adjustment. Grease nipple eliminated from swingarm.

**Details:** Low-fuel warning light in place of voltmeter. Auxiliary electric terminals provided for accessories. Quartz-halogen headlight replaces sealed-beam unit. Reserve lighting system cuts in high beam if low beam burns out, and vice-versa. Seat filled with dual-density foam. New hollow footpegs to isolate vibration. Painted front fender replaces chromed unit. New graphics on tank, sidecovers and tail section.

**Price:** Increased $150 to $2899

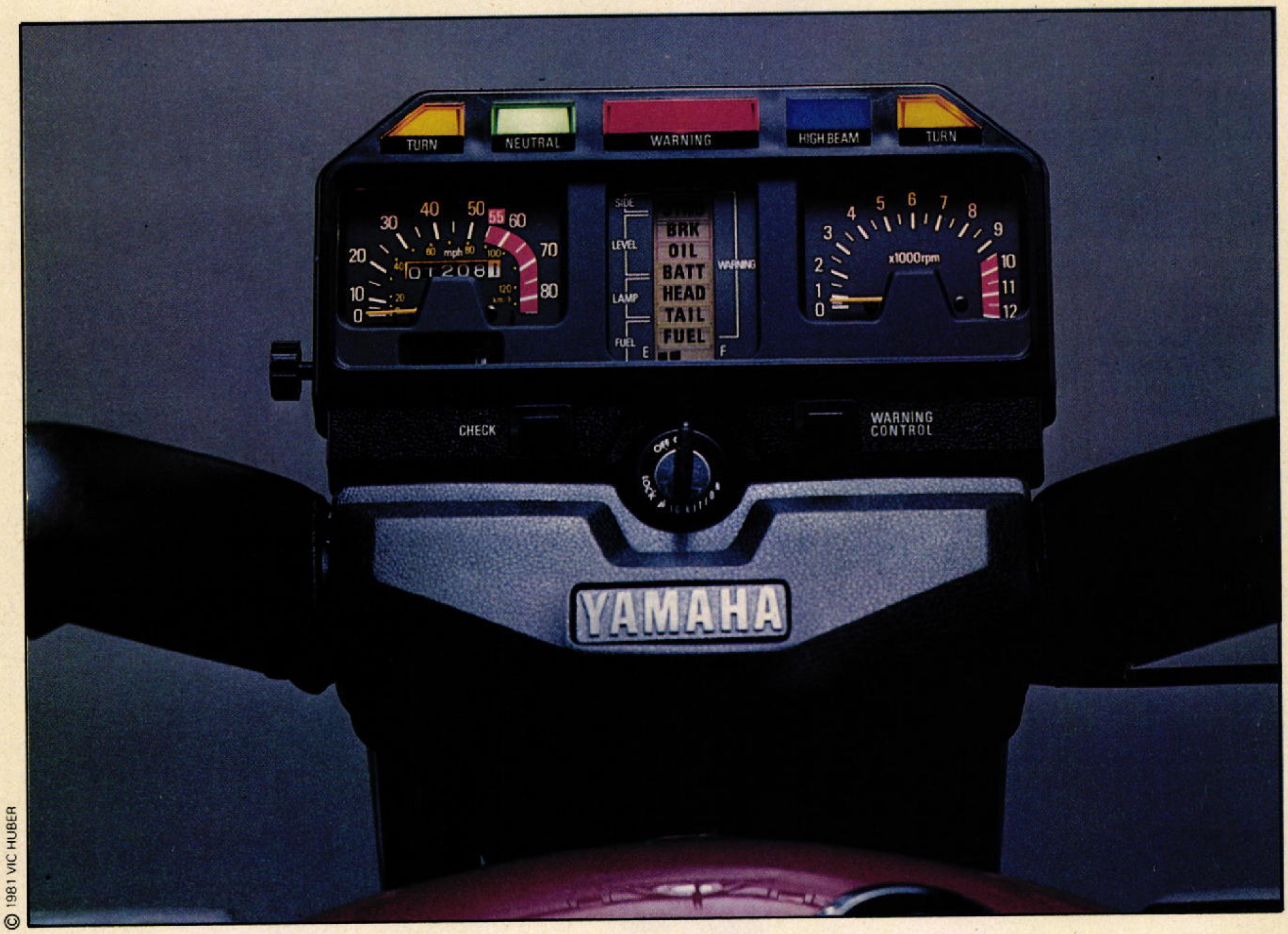
### SUZUKI GS750EX

**Suspension:** Fork tubes receive individual air caps. New rear shocks offer four-position rebound damping in addition to last year's five-position preload selection.

**Details:** Vacuum-operated petcock now has reserve position. New black and red colors receive revised graphic treatment.

**Price:** Increased $200 to $2999.

# CMS Instrumentation: Space Invaders, Anyone?



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• If you're a motorcyclist with an electronics bent, if you've wondered when things like microprocessors, integrated circuits and digital readouts would finally start showing up on two wheels, here's good news: The wait is over. Because stationed right between the 750 Seca's analog speedo and tach is a digital check panel, motorcycling's first computer-controlled system for monitoring a bike's support functions. And while this system is nothing sophisticated enough to dazzle the R&D guys over at Texas Instruments, it still incorporates sufficient modern computer technology to be a landmark achievement for the sport.

Yamaha calls its innovation the Computerized Monitor System (CMS), and it all centers around a vertical row of LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) readouts on the panel. There are eight individual LCDs, seven of which read out the name of the area of the bike they continually monitor (the up/down position of the sidestand; the levels of the front brake fluid, engine oil, battery water and fuel; and the status of the headlight and taillight). The eighth LCD is a four-segment gauge that displays the fuel level in ¼-tank increments. Each LCD gets its information from a calculator-type microprocessor that receives its input from special sensors in the various areas being monitored.

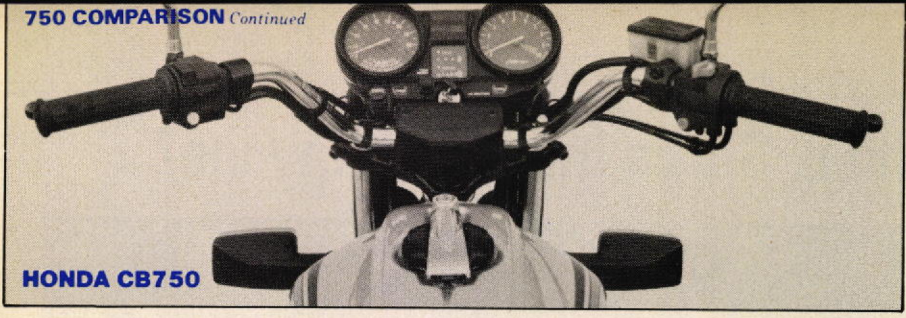
The show begins the instant you turn on the ignition. All eight LCDs display, just to let you know they're on the job. As soon as you start the engine, seven of the LCDs go off (the fuel gauge is always displayed when the key is on), then, one at a time, they take turns flashing on for 0.7 seconds in a top-to-bottom sequence. If all's well, the LCDs then remain blank; but if any of the functions is out of whack, its LCD will stay on and a big red warning light at the top of the dash panel will begin flashing to alert you to the problem.

The CMS behaves the same way if one of the functions develops a problem while you're riding. The red light flashes and the appropriate LCD displays. If the flashing becomes too distracting, pushing the little button on the lower right of the instrument panel will make the light glow steadily, and pushing it yet another time turns the light out altogether—although the affected LCD remains displayed until the malfunction is corrected.

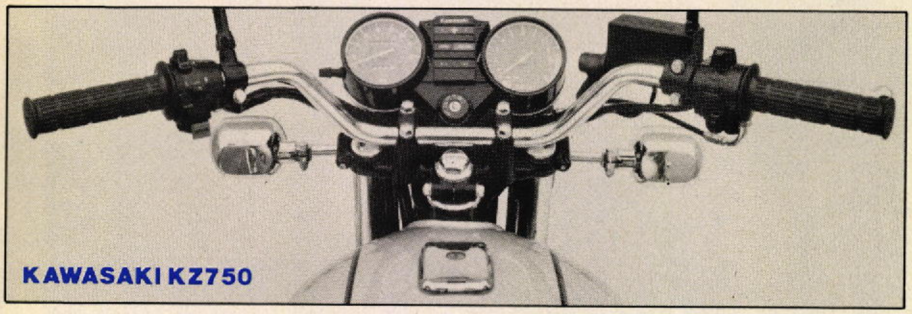
Pushing the button on the lower *left* of the panel allows you to duplicate the one-by-one scan of the functions just like when you first started the engine. You can do that any time you wish just to verify that the CMS is fully operational.

That question of verifying the operational status, though, as well as locating the problems when the system itself fails, introduces a brand-new kind of puzzle for dealership mechanics to solve. In fact, the high degree of difficulty in troubleshooting instrumentation problems is why the aviation industry has developed what it calls B.I.T.E. (Built-In Test Equipment) that can self-diagnose failures not in the monitored functions, but in the monitoring system themselves. Yamaha is aware of this potential service problem and so has developed a special CMS troubleshooting procedure for its dealers.

If that sounds as though motorcycle mechanics of the future will have to be electronics experts as well as nut-and-bolt technicians, that's undoubtedly the case. It's the price of admission for entry into the electronics age. *—Paul Dean*



**HONDA CB750**



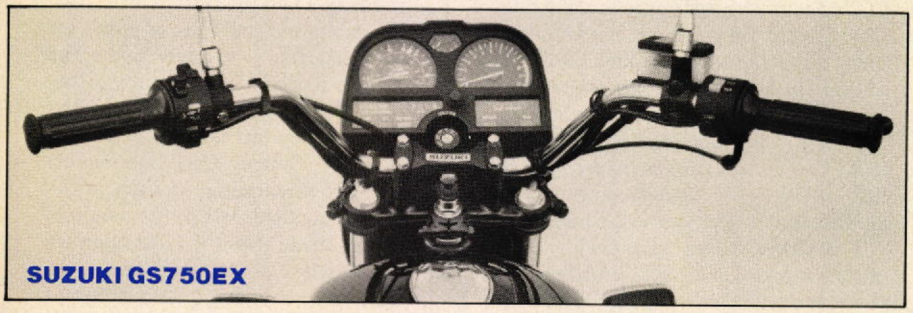
**KAWASAKI KZ750**

would shift the score heavily in favor of the Honda and Kawasaki, but the nine-turn track acted like a three-power loupe, magnifying both the strong and weak points of each bike that we had uncovered on our ride. At the end of hard miles on the track, the Suzuki was still the favorite.

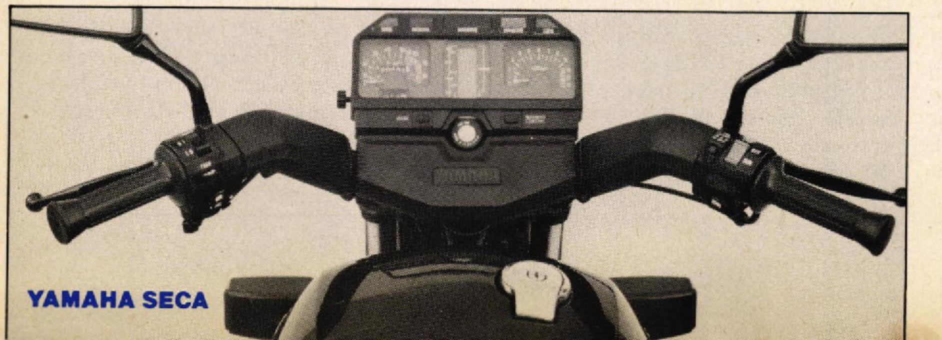
A day at OCIR didn't alter the results. The Seca led the GS through the lights by 0.01 second, with the Suzuki pulling the highest trap speed of the quartet. A full day of quarter-mile runs produced only a 0.18-second split between the fastest and slowest of the superbikes, and only a one-half-mph difference in trap speed. Braking distances from 60 mph were equally close, with a space of only eight feet separating the Seca and the F—the longest and shortest braking distances set. And repeated braking with the Seca confirmed what we had felt on the street: Nothing short of a panic stop produced enough rapid fork compression to bypass the anti-dive system and negate its effects; there was no measurable difference in braking distances with the anti-dive adjusted to different settings; the rider could tell a difference in fork response between full-on and full-off anti-dive settings, but only if he were looking for a difference.

So after street, highway, backroad, roadrace and dragstrip testing, we chose the Suzuki as the winner. The best 750 superbike you can buy. Not only does it have the best highway ride, the second-best handling and impressive results at the racetrack, it also arrives with the best warranty. It's the best overall performer, the three-quarter-liter motorcycle most able to take you where you want to go, as fast as you want to go, in style and comfort.

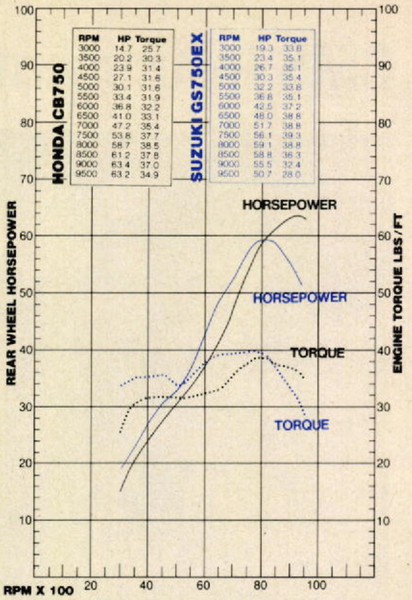
And where does that leave you if you still prefer the F, KZ or Seca? Sitting in the saddle of the bike you like, we hope. Each of these 750s offers something that the others don't, and if your likes match up with what a motorcycle has to offer, that's the one you should be riding. So where does that leave us? Well, we started out counting on the Seca's wild cards as a pat hand. We never figured that the Suzuki was holding a handful of aces. •



**SUZUKI GS750EX**



**YAMAHA SECA**

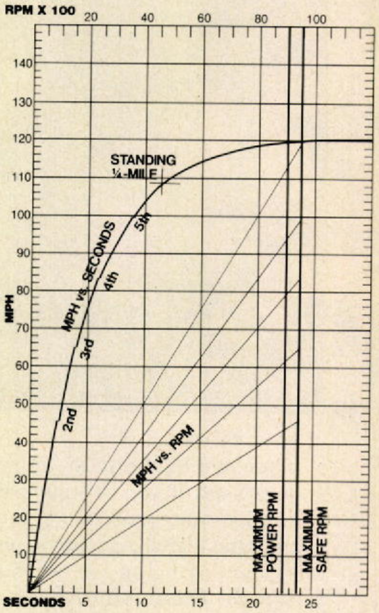


**HONDA CB750**

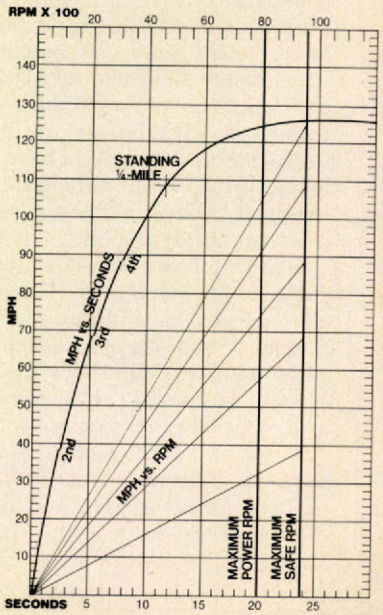
| RPM | HP | Torque |
|---|---|---|
| 3000 | 14.7 | 25.7 |
| 3500 | 20.2 | 30.3 |
| 4000 | 23.9 | 31.4 |
| 4500 | 27.1 | 31.6 |
| 5000 | 30.1 | 31.6 |
| 5500 | 33.4 | 31.9 |
| 6000 | 36.8 | 32.2 |
| 6500 | 41.0 | 33.1 |
| 7000 | 47.2 | 35.4 |
| 7500 | 53.8 | 37.7 |
| 8000 | 58.7 | 38.5 |
| 8500 | 61.2 | 37.8 |
| 9000 | 63.4 | 37.0 |
| 9500 | 63.2 | 34.9 |

**SUZUKI GS750EX**

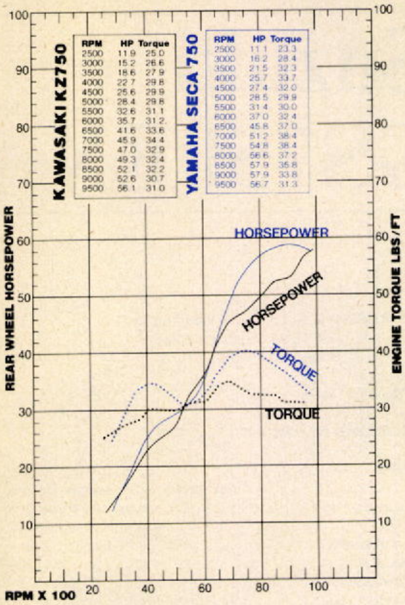
| RPM | HP | Torque |
|---|---|---|
| 3000 | 19.3 | 33.8 |
| 3500 | 23.4 | 35.1 |
| 4000 | 26.7 | 35.1 |
| 4500 | 30.3 | 35.4 |
| 5000 | 32.2 | 33.8 |
| 5500 | 36.8 | 35.1 |
| 6000 | 42.5 | 37.2 |
| 6500 | 48.0 | 38.8 |
| 7000 | 51.7 | 38.8 |
| 7500 | 56.1 | 39.3 |
| 8000 | 59.1 | 38.8 |
| 8500 | 58.8 | 36.3 |
| 9000 | 55.5 | 32.4 |
| 9500 | 50.7 | 28.0 |



**HONDA CB750**



**SUZUKI GS750EX**

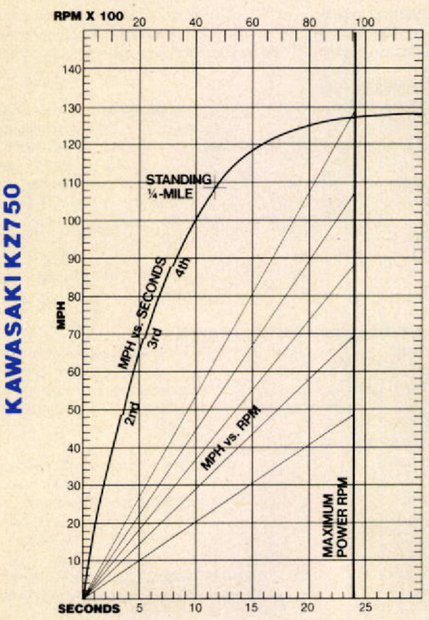


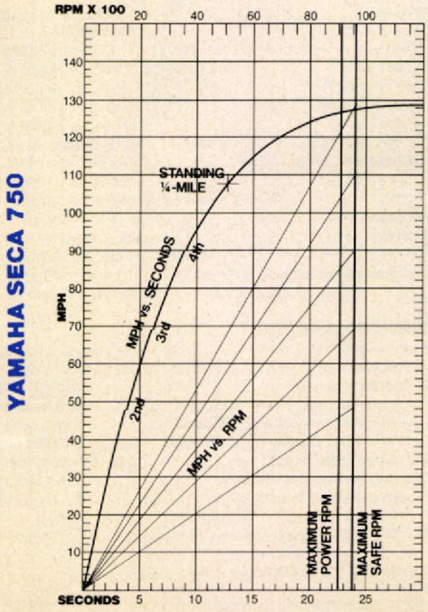
**KAWASAKI KZ750**

| RPM | HP | Torque |
|---|---|---|
| 2500 | 11.9 | 25.0 |
| 3000 | 15.2 | 26.6 |
| 3500 | 18.6 | 27.9 |
| 4000 | 22.7 | 29.8 |
| 4500 | 25.6 | 29.9 |
| 5000 | 28.4 | 29.8 |
| 5500 | 32.6 | 31.1 |
| 6000 | 35.7 | 31.2 |
| 6500 | 41.6 | 33.6 |
| 7000 | 45.9 | 34.4 |
| 7500 | 47.0 | 32.9 |
| 8000 | 49.3 | 32.4 |
| 8500 | 52.1 | 32.2 |
| 9000 | 52.6 | 30.7 |
| 9500 | 56.1 | 31.0 |

**YAMAHA SECA 750**

| RPM | HP | Torque |
|---|---|---|
| 2500 | 11.1 | 23.3 |
| 3000 | 16.2 | 28.4 |
| 3500 | 21.5 | 32.3 |
| 4000 | 25.7 | 33.7 |
| 4500 | 27.4 | 32.0 |
| 5000 | 28.5 | 29.9 |
| 5500 | 31.4 | 30.0 |
| 6000 | 37.0 | 32.4 |
| 6500 | 45.8 | 37.0 |
| 7000 | 51.2 | 38.4 |
| 7500 | 54.8 | 38.4 |
| 8000 | 56.6 | 37.2 |
| 8500 | 57.9 | 35.8 |
| 9000 | 57.9 | 33.8 |
| 9500 | 56.7 | 31.3 |





# Ride Review

• Suzuki's GS is the best all around 750cc motorcycle from Japan, but I wouldn't buy one. Because, for all its attributes, the GS lacks one thing: character. On the racetrack or the freeway the Suzuki does its job brilliantly, but with cold precision.

That same remote feeling would also stop me from buying a Seca 750. Its computerized styling has showroom appeal, but five hundred miles from home it has the soul of a Casio calculator. At the end of each ride the Seca seemed to store my feelings in its computer memory, and I dismounted with no recollection of the miles past.

Unfortunately, I *did* remember every single mile on the Honda. The awkward riding position and uncomfortable seat never let my body relax, and missed gearshifts acted like mile markers, almost making me forget about the superb brakes and handling.

The Kawasaki's seat left me just as uncomfortable as the Honda's, and the KZ certainly did not have the plush Suzuki suspension or the Seca's dazzle. But somehow the bike felt alive, like it was enjoying the ride too, its responsive engine screaming with delight. Only the Kawasaki made me feel like I was riding with a friend. And that's character. —*David Dewhurst*

• There are three combinations of winners in this shootout. First, there's just no question in my mind that the Suzuki is *the* best multi-role 750 in the world. It does everything either absurdly well or well enough compared with the others to notch it ahead in each category. If you had the price of a 750 and not a penny more to spend on custom-tailoring the bike to you, the GS750 is the only rational choice.

But there are two other ways of stacking these bikes. One is by limiting the multi-role importance and zeroing-in on a bike that performs a specific kind of task best. In that case, the winners are: agility/handling: CB750F; touring comfort: Suzuki GS750; street-streak tearing-around: Seca 750; and U-Bild-It Best Buy: Kawasaki 750.

Further, if you were simply after the most image for the least bucks, the Seca would blow *everything* off the road. Even without its aerospace BITE, the bike is so eye-snagging that yesterday's Specials simply fade into so many pseudo-tough pansies. Besides, the flattracker-style handling of the bike insures loads of fun just in riding to the store. It's a two-wheeled Disneyland E-ticket ride, and it looks like it.

But the bottom line is still the top line: the GS750 is The Best.

—*Steve Thompson*

• To shake out the best of this bunch, I conducted a styling sweepstakes. I parked each of these bikes in turn in my garage. Some got lost among the gardening tools, but one made me forget all about mowing the lawn. And since a vital part of any motorcycle's appeal is the way its bodywork makes you itch for the road, styling is as good a test as any for determining a winner in this comparison.

I walked past the KZ and GS and blundered into a Black & Decker hedge-trimmer. The KZ's traditional lines are lackluster while only the Suzuki's tailsection gives me much of a jolt. There's no ignoring the Seca 750, though, with its luscious curves and innovative "downline." It has the kind of self-indulgent look that makes Bo Derek so provocative. But like Bo, the Seca's bloom will probably fade until it looks glitzy and overripe.

The CB750F wins the style sweepstakes because its taut lines tell me that mechanical soul lies beneath the bodywork. Honda continues to have trouble with the accent lines it pastes to the F-type, but the bike still looks just the way it performs—crisp, sleek and high-strung. Each of these 750s makes me happy enough on the road, but only the 750F can give me a thrill just by catching a glimpse of it. —*Michael Jordan*

• Nolo contendere. I simply don't have any contentions or convictions that could keep the Suzuki out of first place in this comparison. I am surprised that a machine with so few changes can feel so different—just a simple suspension rethink has pushed the GS beyond any of its competition. So it gets my Most Improved Award along with Best of Breed.

My panel of sensory judges places the Kawasaki in second place. My main impressions of the KZ are its light weight and nimble handling. The KZ falls short on comfort, but it's long on fun.

If my third place finisher, the Honda CB750F, weighs as much as the Suzuki, then why can't it be just as comfortable? It seems that a cramped, 526-pound bike is the worst of two worlds. Even my 5-foot no-inch passenger found the rear pegs way too high for comfort, and both rider and passenger suffered the hard seat.

Last and least comes the Seca, the Hollywood sport bike. If you want shaft drive and loud horns, they're yours for the highest price of the bunch. Digital readouts and flashing dashboards drive me to distraction. For me, a sport bike should be dedicated to motivation, not animation.

None of these 750s miss the target by much, but the GS is the only bullseye.

—*Riley Tharp*

*Continued*

## Honda CB750F

**IMPORTER:** American Honda Motor Company, Inc.
100 West Alondra Boulevard
Gardena, California 90247

**CATEGORY:** street

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** $2998

### ENGINE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type | four-stroke transverse vertical four |
| Valve arrangement | double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder |
| Bore and stroke | 62.0mm x 62.0mm |
| Displacement | 748.7cc |
| Compression ratio | 9.0:1 |
| Carburetion | four 30mm Keihin constant-vacuum, one accelerator pump |
| Air filter | disposable paper element |
| Lubrication | wet sump |
| Starting system | electric only |
| Ignition | transistorized breakerless |
| Charging system | 12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier |

### DRIVETRAIN

| | |
|---|---|
| Clutch | wet, multi-plate |
| Crankshaft-to-jackshaft | Hy-vo chain; 1.166:1 ratio |
| Jackshaft-to-transmission | straight cut gears; 2.041:1 ratio |
| Final drive | #530 chain (5/8-in. pitch, 3/8-in. width); 2.556:1 (18/46) ratio |

| Gear | Internal gear ratio | Overall gear ratio | MPH per 1000 RPM |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 2.533 | 15.408 | 4.8 |
| II | 1.789 | 10.882 | 6.8 |
| III | 1.391 | 8.461 | 8.7 |
| IV | 1.160 | 7.056 | 10.4 |
| V | 0.964 | 5.864 | 12.5 |

### SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | air-spring, 37mm stanchion tube diameter/ 6.2 in. (157mm) |
| Rear | 5-way adjustable spring preload, 2-way adjustable compression damping, 3-way adjustable rebound damping/4.6 in. (117mm) |

### BRAKES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.8 in. (275mm) discs |
| Rear | single-action hydraulic caliper, 11.6 in. (295mm) disc |

### TIRES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | 3.50H19 Bridgestone Mag Mopus S703 tubeless |
| Rear | 4.25H18 Bridgestone Mag Mopus G504 tubeless |

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 526 lbs. (239kg) |
| Weight distribution | 46.7% front, 53.3% rear |
| Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) | 970 lbs. (440kg) |
| Wheelbase | 59.5 to 60.0 in. (1511 to 1524mm) |
| Seat height | 32.5 in. (826mm) |
| Handlebar width | 30.5 in. (775mm) |
| Footpeg height | 13.8 in. (350mm) |
| Ground clearance | 6.0 in. (152mm), at exhaust pipe |
| Steering head angle | 27.5 degrees from vertical |
| Front wheel trail | 4.3 in. (110mm) |
| Frame | tubular mild steel, double front downtubes |
| Oil capacity | 4.7 qt. (4.5ℓ) |
| Fuel tank | steel, 5.3 gal. (20.0ℓ), including 1.0 gal. (3.8ℓ) reserve |
| Instrumentation | speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer |

### PERFORMANCE

| | |
|---|---|
| Fuel consumption | 38 to 53 mpg (16 to 23 km/ℓ) |
| Range, maximum | 201 to 280 miles (324 to 450km) |
| Range, reserve only | 38 to 53 miles (61 to 85km) |
| Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated | 29 mph actual |
| Speedometer error, 60 mph indicated | 59 mph actual |
| Best ¼-mile acceleration | 12.399 sec., 108.30 mph (174 kph) |
| Top speed (calculated) | 118 mph (191 kph) |
| Stopping distance from 30 mph | 31 ft. (9m) |
| Stopping distance from 60 mph | 126 ft. (38m) |

**WARRANTY:** 6 months/6000 miles

**AVAILABLE COLORS:** metallic silver, black

## Kawasaki KZ750

**IMPORTER:** Kawasaki Motors Corporation
2009 East Edinger Avenue
Santa Ana, California 92711

**CATEGORY:** street

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** $2899

### ENGINE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type | four-stroke transverse vertical four |
| Valve arrangement | double overhead camshafts |
| Bore and stroke | 66.0mm x 54.0mm |
| Displacement | 738.0cc |
| Compression ratio | 9.0:1 |
| Carburetion | four 34mm Keihin constant-vacuum |
| Air filter | disposable paper element |
| Lubrication | wet sump |
| Starting system | electric only |
| Ignition | transistorized breakerless |
| Charging system | 12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier |

### DRIVETRAIN

| | |
|---|---|
| Clutch | wet, multi-plate |
| Crankshaft-to-jackshaft | Hy-vo chain; 1.174:1 ratio |
| Jackshaft-to-transmission | straight-cut gears; 2.172:1 ratio |
| Final drive | #530 chain (5/8-in. pitch, 3/8-in. width); 2.540:1 (13/33) ratio |

| Gear | Internal gear ratio | Overall gear ratio | MPH per 1000 RPM |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 2.333 | 15.110 | 5.0 |
| II | 1.632 | 10.570 | 7.2 |
| III | 1.273 | 8.254 | 9.2 |
| IV | 1.040 | 6.736 | 11.3 |
| V | 0.875 | 5.667 | 13.5 |

### SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | air-spring, 36mm stanchion tube diameter/ 5.8 in. (147mm) |
| Rear | 5-way adjustable spring preload, 4-way adjustable rebound damping/4.0 in. (102mm) |

### BRAKES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.2-in. (260mm) discs |
| Rear | double-action hydraulic caliper, 10.2-in. (260mm) disc |

### TIRES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | 3.25H19 Dunlop Gold Seal F-8 tubeless |
| Rear | 4.00H18 Dunlop Gold Seal K-127 tubeless |

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 471 lbs. (214kg) |
| Weight distribution | 46.0% front, 54.0% rear |
| Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) | 864 lbs. (391kg) |
| Wheelbase | 56.0 to 57.1 in. (1422 to 1450mm) |
| Seat height | 31.3 in. (795mm) |
| Handlebar width | 30.0 in. (762mm) |
| Footpeg height | 12.8 in. (325mm) |
| Ground clearance | 6.3 in. (160mm), at exhaust pipe |
| Steering head angle | 27.0 degrees from vertical |
| Front wheel trail | 4.21 in. (107mm) |
| Frame | tubular mild steel, double front downtubes |
| Oil capacity | 3.7 qt. (3.5ℓ) |
| Fuel tank | steel, 4.3 gal. (16.4ℓ), including 0.8 gal. (2.9ℓ) reserve |
| Instrumentation | speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer |

### PERFORMANCE

| | |
|---|---|
| Fuel consumption | 38 to 60 mpg (16 to 26 km/ℓ) |
| Range, maximum | 163 to 258 miles (262 to 415km) |
| Range, reserve only | 30 to 48 miles (48 to 77km) |
| Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated | 29 mph actual |
| Speedometer error, 60 mph indicated | 60 mph actual |
| Best ¼-mile acceleration | 12.431 sec., 108.17 mph (174 kph) |
| Top speed (calculated) | 128 mph (206 kph) |
| Stopping distance from 30 mph | 32 ft. (10m) |
| Stopping distance from 60 mph | 128 ft. (39m) |

**WARRANTY:** 6 months

**AVAILABLE COLORS:** Moon Dust silver,
Candy Persimmon red

## Suzuki GS750EX

**IMPORTER:** U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

**CATEGORY:** street

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** $2999

### ENGINE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type | four-stroke transverse vertical four |
| Valve arrangement | double overhead camshafts, four valves per cylinder |
| Bore and stroke | 67.0mm x 53.0mm |
| Displacement | 747.4cc |
| Compression ratio | 9.4:1 |
| Carburetion | four 32mm Mikuni constant-vacuum |
| Air filter | disposable paper element |
| Lubrication | wet sump |
| Starting system | electric only |
| Ignition | transistorized breakerless |
| Charging system | 12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier |

### DRIVETRAIN

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary drive | helical gears; 2.163:1 ratio |
| Clutch | wet, multi-plate |
| Final drive | #630 chain (3/4-in. pitch, 3/8-in. width); 2.733:1 (15/41) ratio |

| Gear | Internal gear ratio | Overall gear ratio | MPH per 1000 RPM |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 2.571 | 15.201 | 5.0 |
| II | 1.778 | 10.510 | 7.2 |
| III | 1.381 | 8.164 | 9.3 |
| IV | 1.125 | 6.651 | 11.4 |
| V | 0.962 | 5.684 | 13.3 |

### SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | air-spring, 35mm stanchion tube diameter/ 6.1 in. (155mm) |
| Rear | 5-way adjustable spring preload, 4-way adjustable rebound damping/4.5 in. (114mm) |

### BRAKES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 10.8-in. (275mm) discs |
| Rear | double-action hydraulic caliper, 10.8-in. (275mm) disc |

### TIRES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | 3.25H19 IRC Grand High Speed GS-11AW |
| Rear | 4.00H19 IRC Grand High Speed GS-11AW |

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 525 lbs. (238kg) |
| Weight distribution | 46.5% front, 53.5% rear |
| Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) | 1026 lbs. (465kg) |
| Wheelbase | 58.0 to 59.0 in. (1473 to 1499mm) |
| Seat height | 32.0 in. (813mm) |
| Handlebar width | 29.3 in. (744mm) |
| Footpeg height | 13.0 in. (330mm) |
| Ground clearance | 6.0 in. (152mm), at exhaust pipe |
| Steering head angle | 28.0 degrees from vertical |
| Front wheel trail | 4.06 in. (103mm) |
| Frame | tubular mild steel, double front downtubes |
| Oil capacity | 3.4 qt. (3.2ℓ) |
| Fuel tank | steel, 5.0 gal. (18.9ℓ), including 1.1 gal. (4.3ℓ) reserve |
| Instrumentation | speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer, fuel gauge, gear indicator |

### PERFORMANCE

| | |
|---|---|
| Fuel consumption | 44 to 52 mpg (19 to 21km/ℓ) |
| Range, maximum | 220 to 260 miles (354 to 418km) |
| Range, reserve only | 48 to 57 miles (77 to 92km) |
| Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated | 29 mph actual |
| Speedometer error, 60 mph indicated | 58 mph actual |
| Best ¼-mile acceleration | 12.261 sec., 108.56 mph (175 kph) |
| Top speed (calculated) | 128 mph (206 kph) |
| Stopping distance from 30 mph | 29 ft. (9m) |
| Stopping distance from 60 mph | 130 ft. (40m) |

**WARRANTY:** 12 months unlimited mileage

**AVAILABLE COLORS:** black, red

# Yamaha Seca 750

**IMPORTER:** Yamaha Motor Corporation, U.S.A.
6555 Katella Avenue
Cypress, California 90630

**CATEGORY:** street

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** $3199

### ENGINE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type | four-stroke transverse vertical four |
| Valve arrangement | double overhead camshafts |
| Bore and stroke | 65.0mm x 56.4mm |
| Displacement | 748.6cc |
| Compression ratio | 9.2:1 |
| Carburetion | four 32mm Hitachi constant-vacuum |
| Air filter | disposable paper element |
| Lubrication | wet sump |
| Starting system | electric only |
| Ignition | transistorized pointless, dual electronic pickups, dual coils |
| Charging system | 12-volt; alternator, voltage regulator, rectifier |

### DRIVETRAIN

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary drive | helical gears; 1.672:1 ratio |
| Clutch | wet, multi-plate |
| Transmission-to-middle-gear | straight-cut gears; 1.361:1 ratio |
| Middle-gear-to-driveshaft | spiral-bevel gears; 1.056:1 ratio |
| Driveshaft-to-rear-wheel | spiral-bevel gears; 2.909:1 ratio |

| Gear | Internal gear ratio | Overall gear ratio | MPH per 1000 RPM |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 2.188 | 15.294 | 5.0 |
| II | 1.500 | 10.484 | 7.3 |
| III | 1.154 | 8.066 | 9.5 |
| IV | 0.933 | 6.521 | 11.7 |
| V | 0.813 | 5.662 | 13.5 |

### SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | air-spring, 36mm stanchion tube diameter, brake-actuated hydraulic anti-dive / 5.8 in. (147mm) |
| Rear | 5-way adjustable spring preload, 4-way adjustable rebound damping / 4.0 in. (102mm) |

### BRAKES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | dual single-action hydraulic calipers, 11.8-in. (300mm) discs |
| Rear | drum, single-leading shoe, rod-operated |

### TIRES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | 3.25H19 Bridgestone Mag Mopus L303 tubeless |
| Rear | 120/90-18 65H Bridgestone Mag Mopus 5716 tubeless |

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

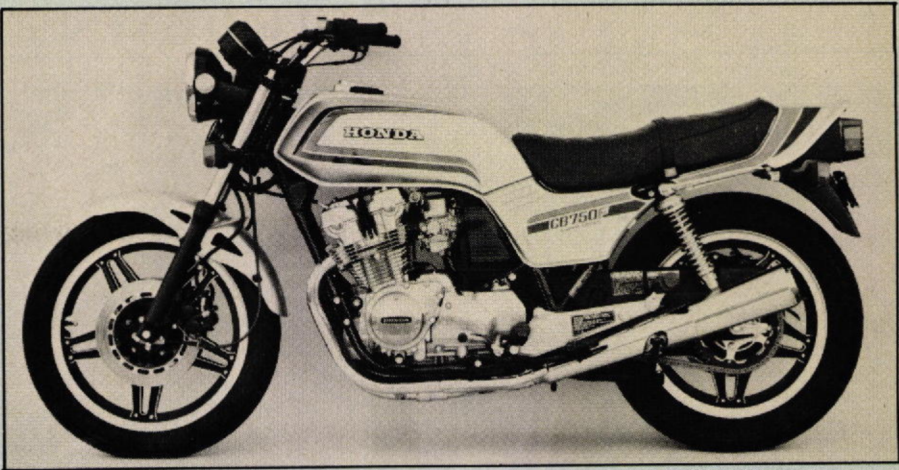
| | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 495 lbs. (224kg) |
| Weight distribution | 47.0% front, 53.0% rear |
| Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) | 1000 lbs. (454kg) |
| Wheelbase | 57.3 in. (1455mm) |
| Seat height | 30.5 in. (775mm) |
| Handlebar width | 29.3 in. (744mm) |
| Footpeg height | 11.8 in. (300mm) |
| Ground clearance | 5.8 in. (147mm), at exhaust pipe |
| Steering head angle | 28.0 degrees from vertical |
| Front wheel trail | 4.5 in. (114mm) |
| Frame | tubular mild steel, double front downtubes |
| Oil capacity | 3.7 qt. (3.5*l*) |
| Fuel tank | steel, 4.6 gal. (17.5*l*), including 0.66 gal. (2.5*l*) reserve |
| Instrumentation | speedometer, odometer, tripmeter resettable to zero, tachometer, fuel gauge, LCD systems check panel |

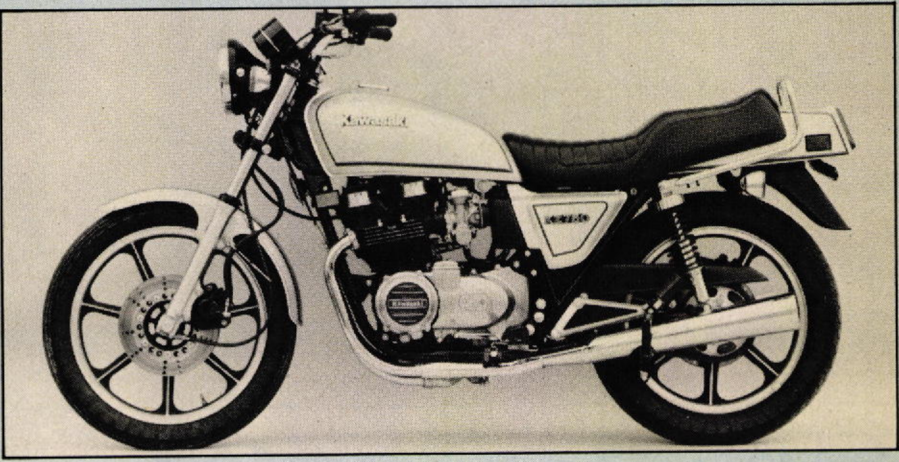
### PERFORMANCE

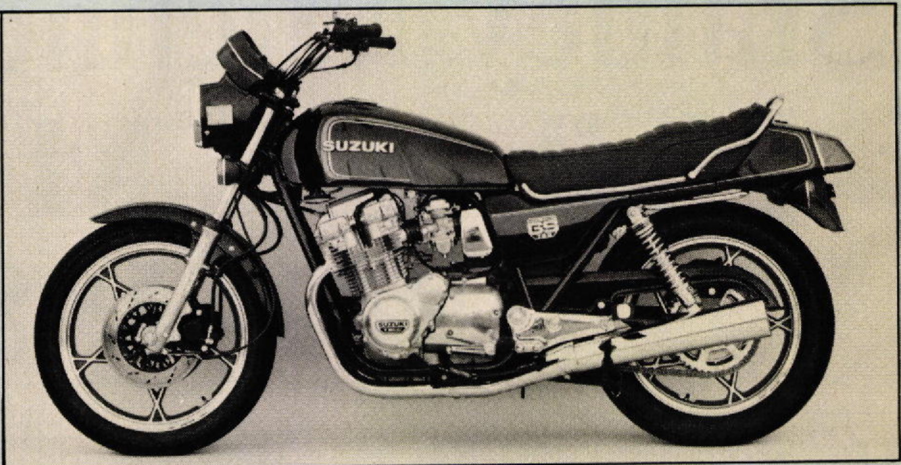
| | |
|---|---|
| Fuel consumption | 44 to 56 mpg (19 to 24km/*l*) |
| Range, maximum | 202 to 258 miles (325 to 414km) |
| Range, reserve only | 29 to 37 miles (47 to 59km) |
| Speedometer error, 30 mph indicated | 31 mph actual |
| Speedometer error, 60 mph indicated | 60 mph actual |
| Best ¼-mile acceleration | 12.258 sec., 108.04 mph (174 kph) |
| Top speed (calculated) | 128 mph (206 kph) |
| Stopping distance from 30 mph | 32 ft. (10m) |
| Stopping distance from 60 mph | 134 ft. (41m) |

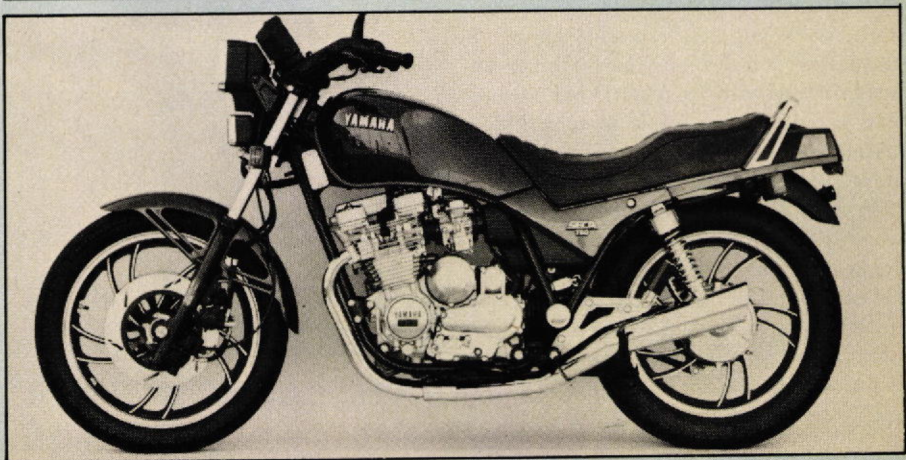
**WARRANTY:** 6 months

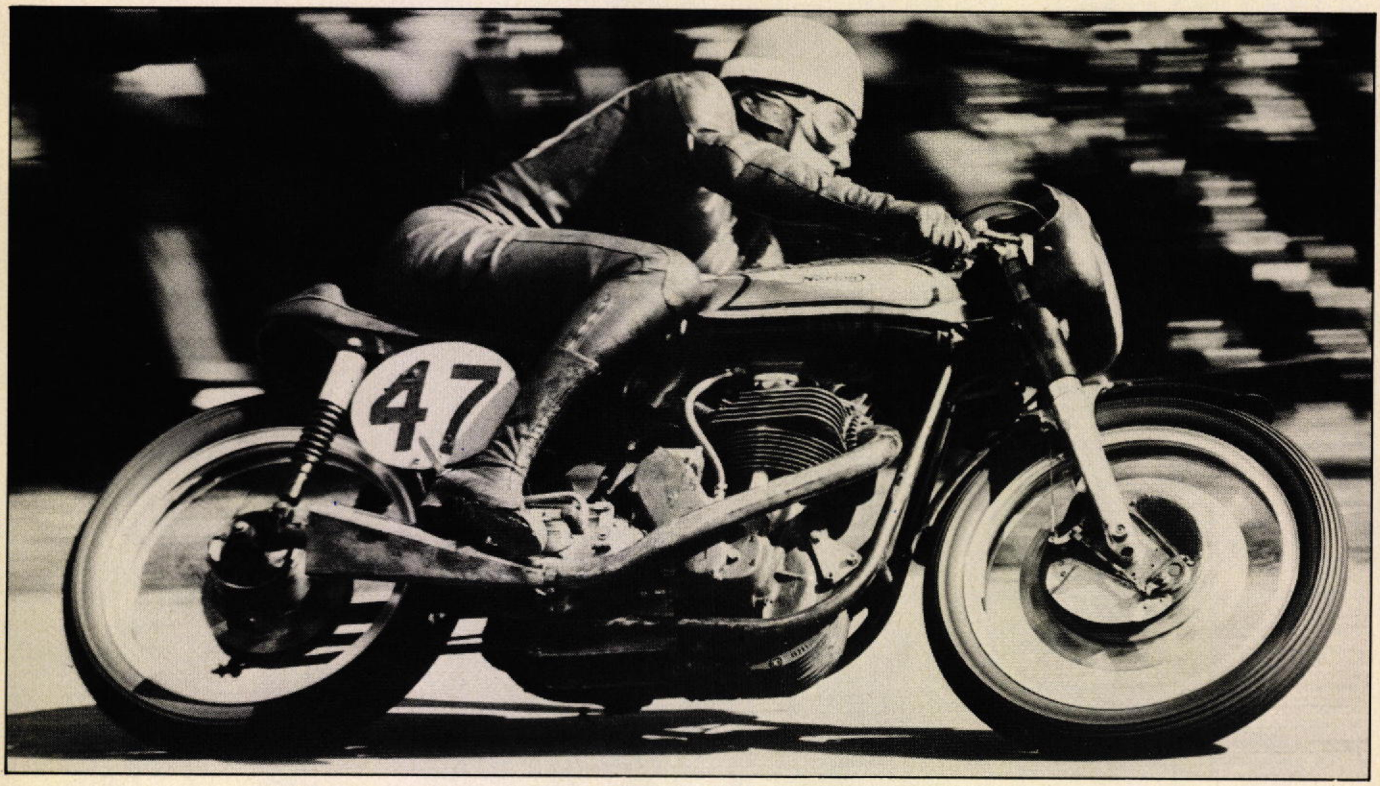
**AVAILABLE COLORS:** Yamaha Black, Brilliant Red







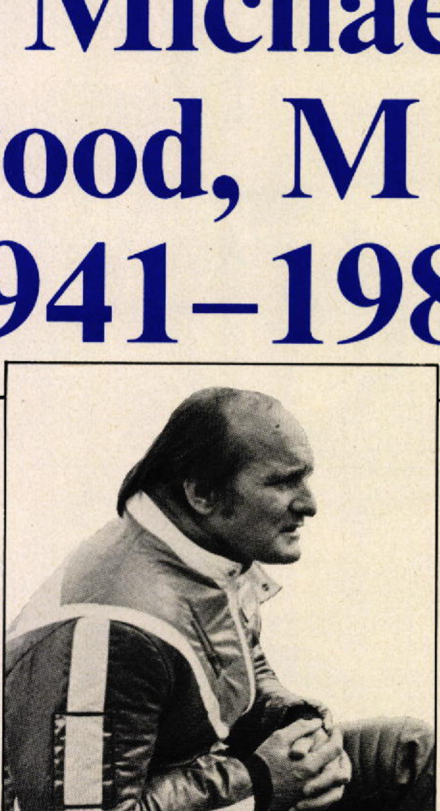




PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY PETER STARR

# Stanley Michael Bailey Hailwood, M.B.E. (1941–1981)

He was, of course, nine-times World Champion. He stormed into motorcycle roadracing at the tender age of 17 and forged himself into *the* legend in an era bursting with legends. When Grand Prix racing meant brave men in black leathers doing impossible things with machines so radical that each race became a tech war, Stanley Michael Bailey Hailwood, M.B.E., did the most impossible things, set the most astonishing records. He rode with such skill that at age 20 he became the youngest factory team racer (with Honda) in history, and in the following seven years charged the GP scene with such courage and excitement that millions of people who would know him only through black-and-white photos in magazines would say the words "Mike the Bike" with awe and that special fondness only our greatest heroes can wring from us.



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY PETER STARR

*"Long live the King!"*

Hailwood died following a car accident on March 21, 1981, 40 years after he was born. He slammed his Rover 3500 into a truck in England, reportedly during a short run with his two children. Reportedly, too, he died trying to position the car to save his kids. The reports may be in error, but such was Hailwood's special hold on us that it's perfectly natural to imagine him doing such a thing. He was that kind of man.

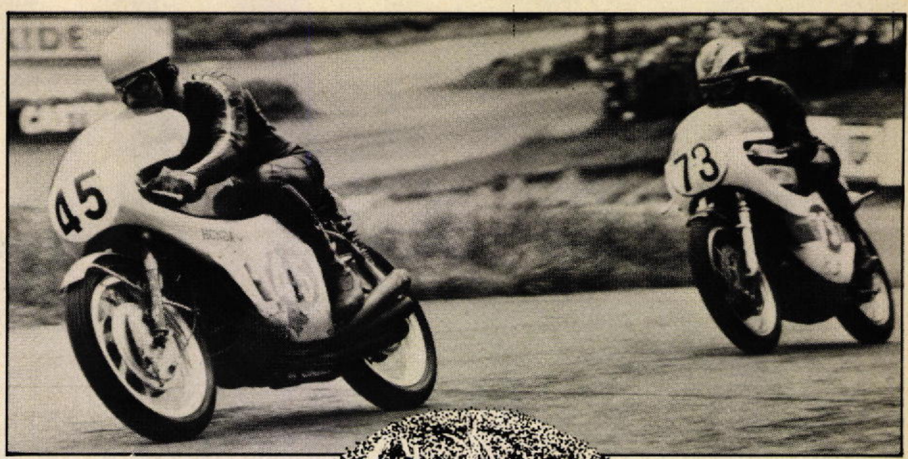
Ironically, though, it isn't as a racer that Hailwood left his imprint on history, and especially not on we American enthusiasts.

He was not by any means a calculating development engineer—no John Surtees or Jim Redman. Nor was he a stellar personality; most who knew him speak of his shyness with the press, his fondness for fast cars, girls and a good party, but no one suggests an image of larger-than-life living for him.

He should be remembered therefore not simply as one of the greatest practitioners of an arcane art, not simply as a nice bloke but as the man who symbolized an era for a generation of American motorcyclists. To say "Grand Prix" during the Sixties was to conjure his name, and that of Honda, then synonymous with ear-shattering and race-winning engines. He and Honda won all the marbles, of course, but it was the battles, not the victories, that mesmerized us. It was his set jaw jutting out from that famous white-and-gold porridge pot helmet atop a six-cylinder 250's windscreen that caught our eyes in the then-new motomags and, perhaps most importantly, gave us a new kind of hero. In the psychobabble of the Seventies, Hailwood became an alternate role model for us; just as The Outlaw and the Flattracker were turning stale—and turning off large numbers of the Step-Through-To-Super Hawk generation just then blooming into literal flower power—he arose on our horizon and gave new direction to every motorcyclist who longed to escape the confines of the stereotypes available. He gave us a new awareness of the excitement, the technology, the drama, the sheer explosive energy of our sport. He made us proud to be enthusiasts, to share the joy of riding with him.

During his comeback ride at the Isle of Man—in which he astounded the younger riders and fans alike with his win in the F1 race—most of those watching his brilliant style were tense, as though straining to avert the catastrophic crash that seems to foredoom the comebacks of even the greatest racers. When he won and gracefully retired again, a collective sigh arose from us all; whatever his fate, it would not be ignominious. He would not crash while struggling in ninth place. It was, perhaps, a cruel thought, but humanity affords its heroes no mercy, and as motorcycling's hero, Mike Hailwood had—and has—no equal.

The mildest form of accolade for his greatness is to say that his character and accomplishments popularized Grand Prix racing in a way no other man has been able to, before or since. But to those who saw him ride, and even to the millions who didn't but caught some of the magic, he was far more than a mere publicist for a company or even an era. He was the sport embodied. —*Steve Thompson*



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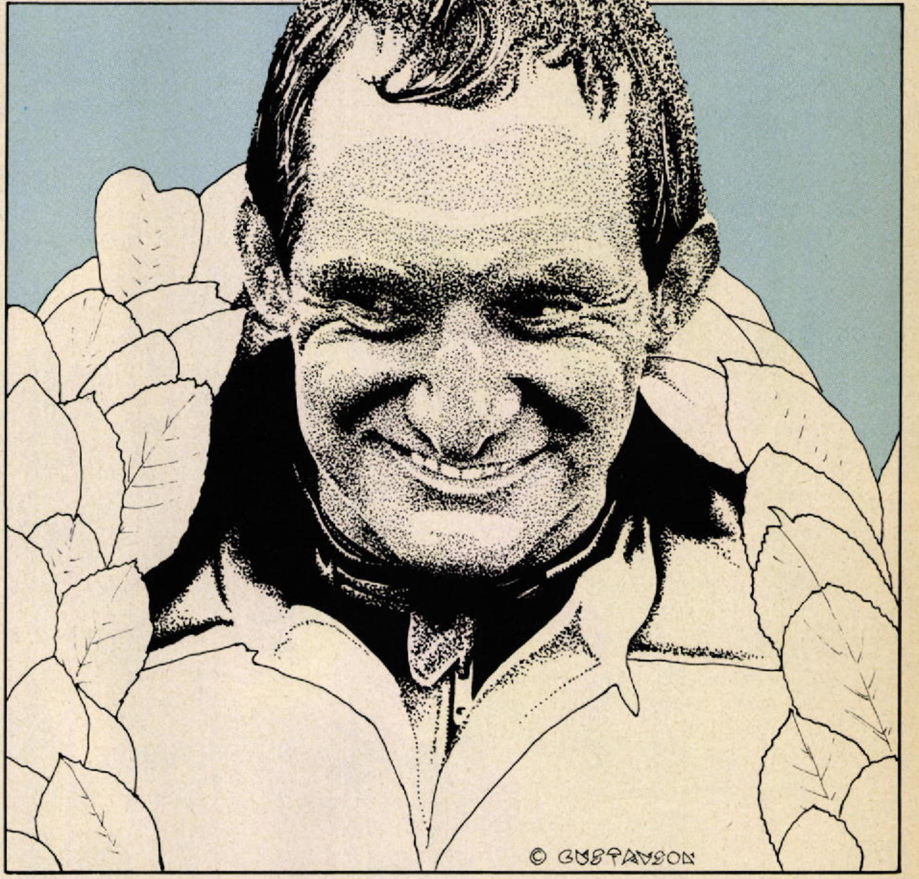

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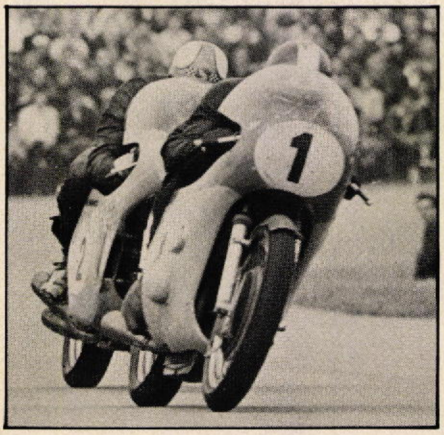

PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY BRUCE COX

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**Manx Norton (opposite) circa 1959; (top) leading Phil Read, Honda 350, Cadwell Park, 1968; (left) Agostini's MV leads Hailwood's Honda 500, Dutch TT '67; Honda 250cc Six.**

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Kawasaki
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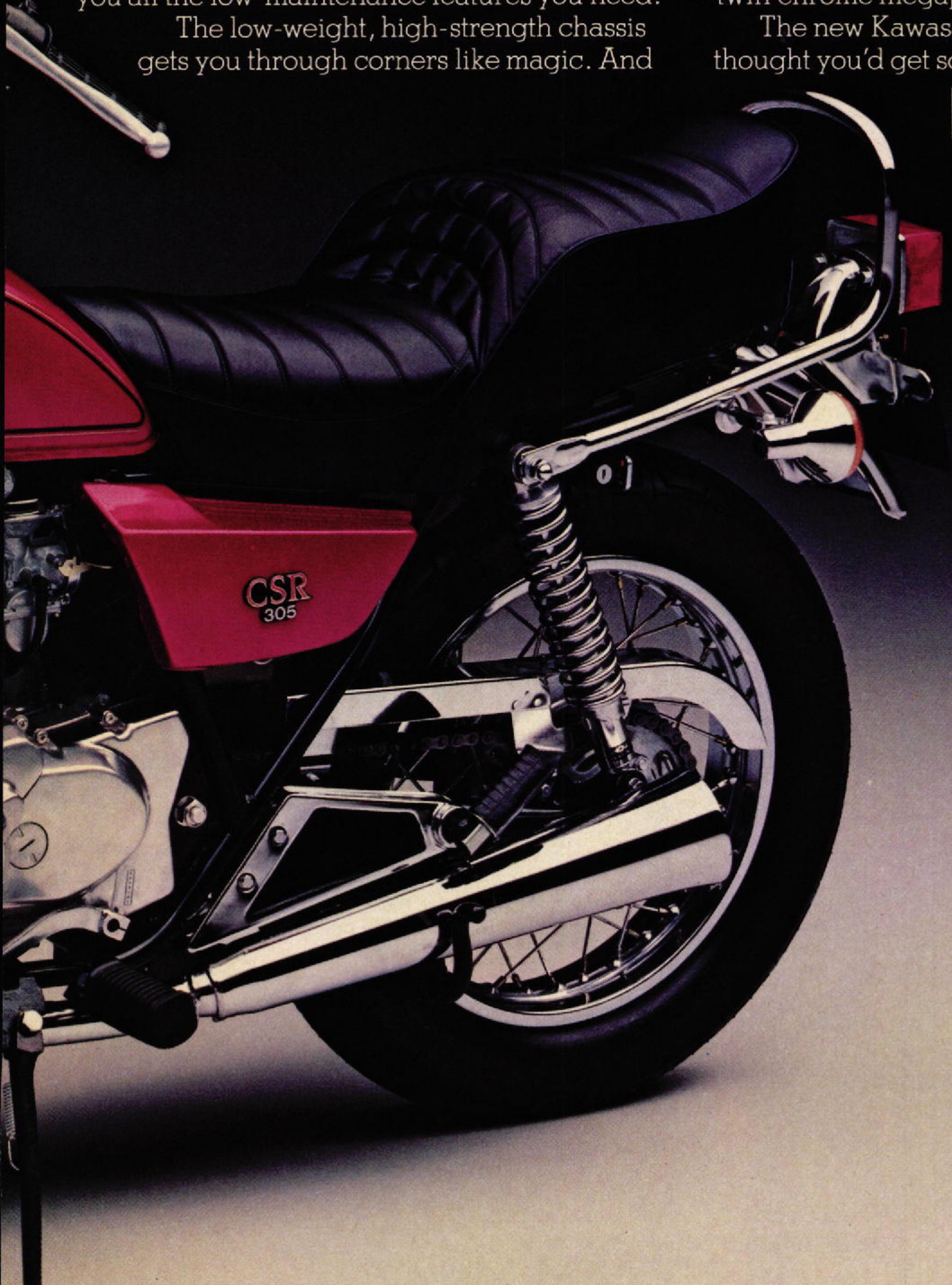

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## *PRODUCT EVALUATION:*

# Don Vesco Products Rabid Transit Fairing

*Protection from a street streamliner.*

• You won't find many fairings that combine form and function like the Rabid Transit model from Don Vesco Products. Indeed, while some designers appear to find rider protection and good looks mutually exclusive, Vesco and partner Matt Guzetta have shown that they are not.

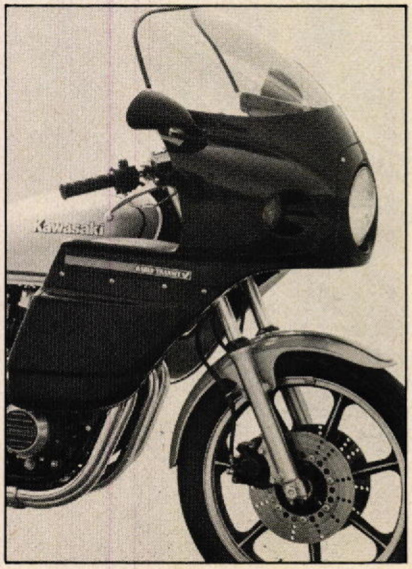
As with many fairings, good looks alone were not difficult to design into the Rabid Transit. But with their roadrace and land speed record experience, Vesco and Guzetta knew how to combine aerodynamic efficiency, too. They tested their theories on the racetrack, and their prototype fairing evolved into sport-touring protection for the street.

That track-tested heritage is still apparent, because a low café handlebar is included with each bubble-screen model. (An upright touring screen and high bar are also available.) You will have to perform a simple modification to the steering stops to restrict turning movement, but this allows the bars to fit snugly inside the curvacious black fiberglass. More importantly, the low bars help you tuck in behind the screen, blending bike and rider into one wind-cheating unit.

The resulting riding position on our Kawasaki KZ750 felt comfortable on the freeway. And with only your helmet sticking up in the wind blast, your torso is very well protected. The handlebar bulges force air away from your hands, arms and shoulders, while the rest of the nosepiece does a very good job of redirecting air away from your chest. But the best indication of aerodynamic efficiency is that the air that inevitably strikes your helmet is not at all turbulent. Only BMW's wind tunnel-tested RS fairing matches the Rabid Transit's smooth air flow.

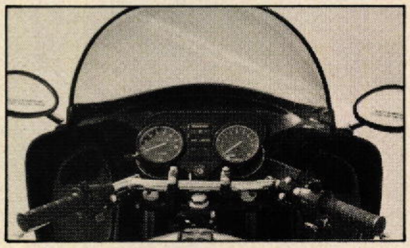
Behind the Vesco screen you can enjoy a quiet and almost undisturbed world. This makes it practical to park a radio into the prefitted mounting position in the front of the nosepiece. With two small speakers sitting in the flat panels on either side of the radio you can enjoy music with minimal interference from Mother Nature.

Unfortunately, the elements will make themselves felt on your legs. Because of the fairing's universal design—fitting anything from a 550 Suzuki to a GL1100, with different brackets—the Rabid Transit does not offer total protection. Air flows freely between the motor and lowers, which might be welcome in Summer, but in the dead of Winter you will wish for a better air seal. You will also curse the streamlined Vitaloni mirrors that vibrate and buzz enough to be useless. Silicone seal between the moveable lens and outer shroud will cut down vibration, but not enough.



**Racey looks and rider protection**

*A careful blend of form and function.*



**Low-bar and a small bubble screen**

*Cockpit of a high speed sport tourer.*

But despite shortcomings, the Rabid Transit from Vesco is a very good fairing. For $480, including low bars, you get a useful product that will adapt to most motorcycles. And best of all, it offers efficient protection *and* good looks—a boon that few other fairings share.

The Rabid Transit fairing is available from Don Vesco Products, Inc., 7565 North Avenue, Lemon Grove, California 92045. —*David Dewhurst*

THE NAME SAYS IT ALL
DG
Street PERFORMANCE

DG
Street PERFORMANCE

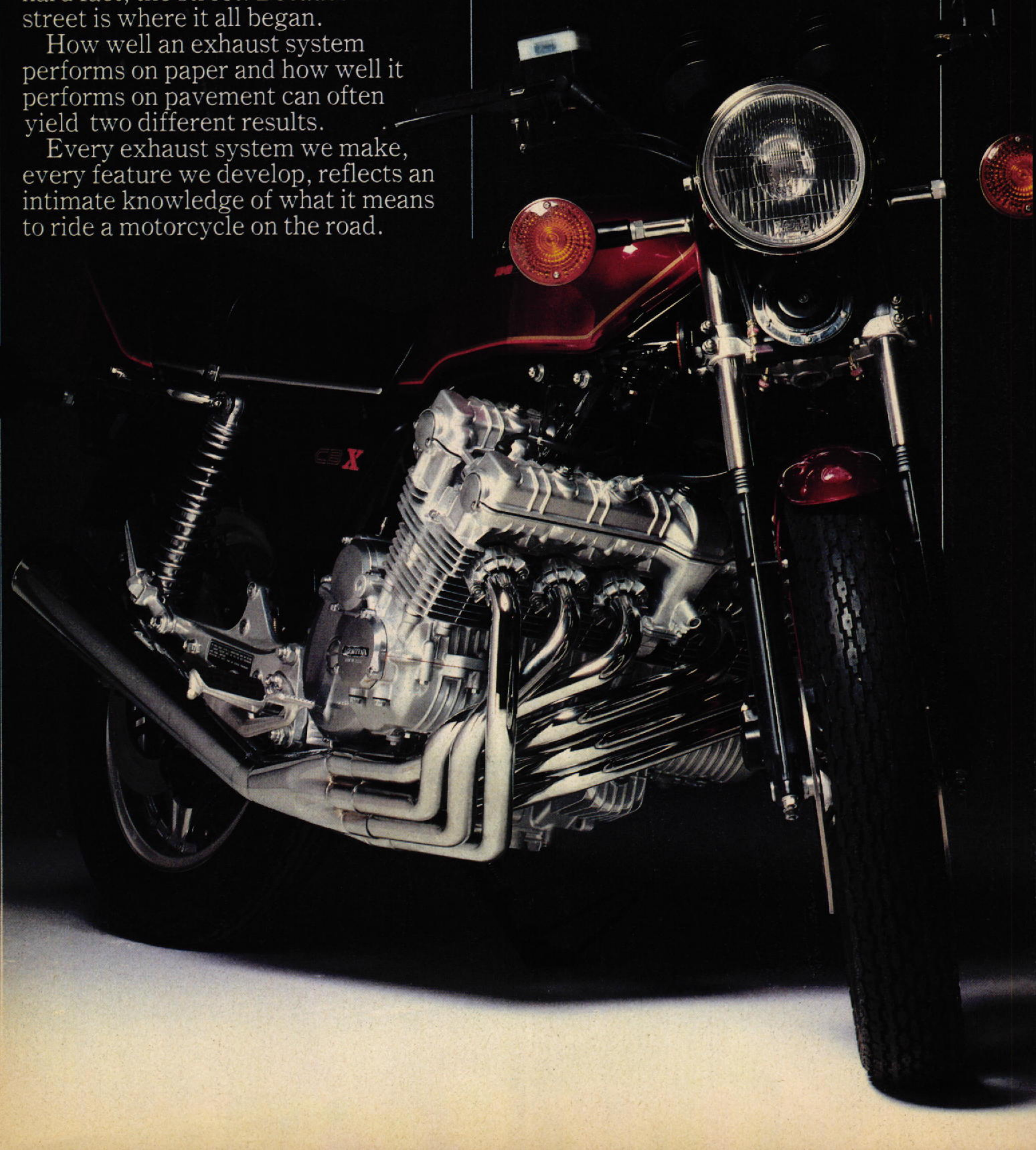
WHAT'S IN A NAME?

When DG sets out to design and build the finest exhaust system we know of we never lose sight of one hard fact; the street. Because the street is where it all began.

How well an exhaust system performs on paper and how well it performs on pavement can often yield two different results.

Every exhaust system we make, every feature we develop, reflects an intimate knowledge of what it means to ride a motorcycle on the road.

We know of only one sure way to acquire that kind of knowledge. Ride the machine on test tracks, on grueling road racing courses, and on the very streets and highways you ride.



# HONDA EXHAUST SYSTEMS

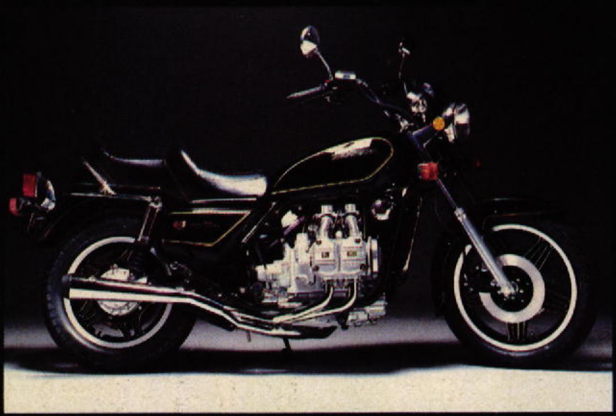
This first hand knowledge of what street bikes demand of an exhaust system inspires the innovative designs and features that set DG street exhaust systems apart from all others.

For example with DG exhaust you get an increase in horsepower plus added gas mileage. All of our exhaust systems are easy to install with complete detailed instructions and all necessary mounting hardware.

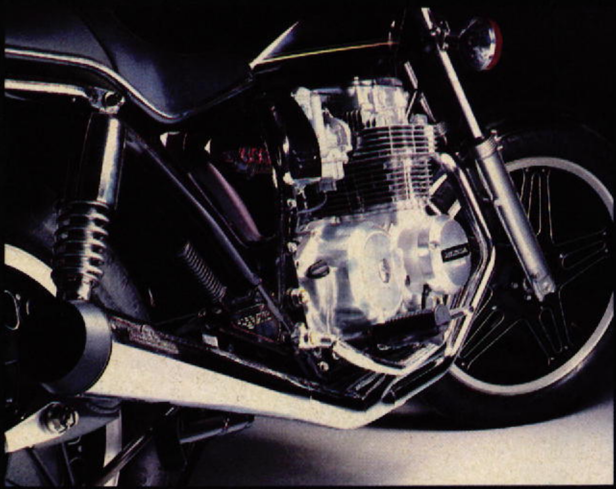
For the touring rider there is plenty of clearance for all of your accessories. Our megaphones are never higher than the manufacturer stock system that allows maximum clearance for any style bags.

The sporting rider is treated to all these benefits plus DG's high cornering clearance designs.

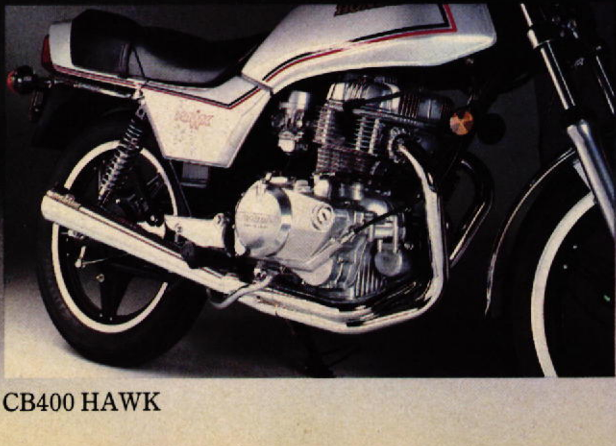
We realize that a performance exhaust system should not interfere with basic operation and maintenance of the machine. That's why, at DG, we pay careful attention to details such as oil filter and drain plug access, and the retention of both side and centerstands.



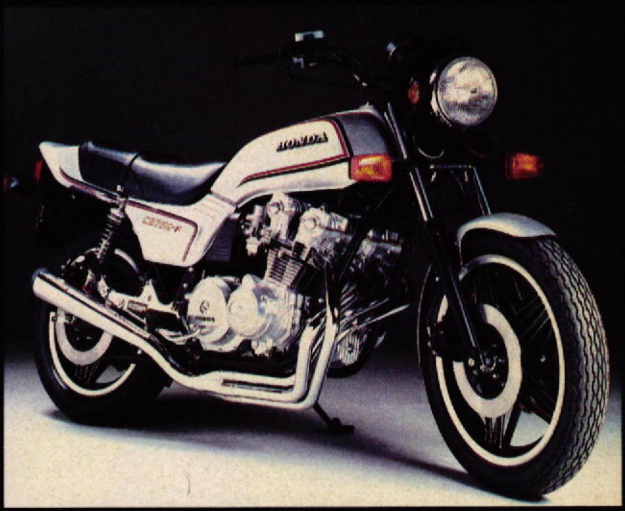
GL1100



CB650 CUSTOM



CB400 HAWK



CB750F

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HONDA

| | |
|---|---|
| CBX | 172-119-00-0 |
| GL1100, 1000 | 151-119-00-0 |
| CB900 | 180-119-00-0 |
| CB750F, 81 | 181-119-00-0 |
| CB750K, 81 | 182-119-00-0 |
| CB750F, 79-80 | 176-119-00-0 |
| CB750K, 79-80 | 177-119-00-0 |
| CB750F, 77-78 | 168-119-00-0 |
| CB-750K, 77-78 | 169-119-00-0 |
| CB650K, 81 | 183-119-00-0 |
| CB650 CUSTOM 81 | 184-119-00-0 |
| CB650K & CUSTOM 79-80 | 178-119-00-0 |
| CX500 ALL | 175-119-00-0 |
| CB400 HAWK ALL | 173-119-00-0 |

## SUZUKI EXHAUST SYSTEMS

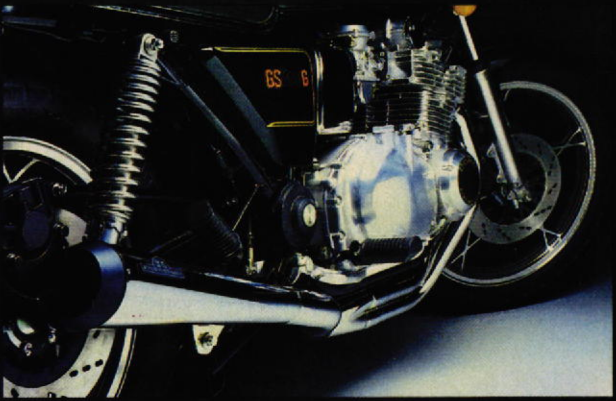
Mean streets, blueprints and computer programs can't cut it where a performance exhaust system does its work. We never lose sight of the hardest fact of exhaust system design: concrete.

Every exhaust system we make reflects an unyielding desire to meet the street and beat it. We do all the paperwork, running hundreds of rpm passes on the dyno, and let market analysts have their say. But until a white coated lab technician astride a dynamometer pulls up next to you at a stoplight we know where the real testing is done: mean streets.

GS750

The sounds of the streets are as varied as the sights along the way. DG PERFORMANCE took the sound that a street performance exhaust system should have and broke it down. There are no pussycats prowling the streets with a faint meow. No computer dialed in the supersonic whine of a jet fighter. The DG sound is music; mellow, resonant and mean. It is the sound of the streets.

GS550 LTD


GS1000

GS1100

SUZUKI

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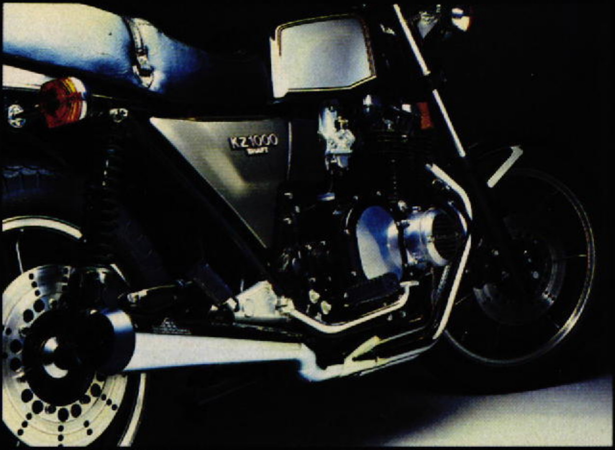
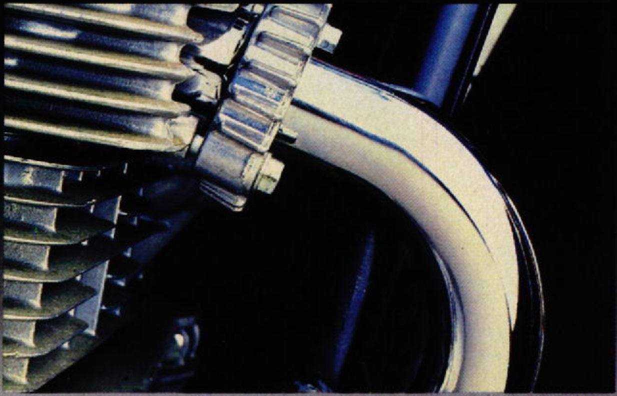
| GS1100 80-81 | 385-119-00-0 |
| GS1000 80-81 | 390-119-00-0 |
| GS1000 LTD 80-81 | 380-119-00-0 |
| GS850 80-81 | 394-119-00-0 |
| GS750 80-81 | 386-119-00-0 |
| GS750 LTD 80-81 | 387-119-00-0 |
| GS750 77-79 | 391-119-00-0 |
| GS550 | 392-119-00-0 |
| GS550 LTD | |
| GS450 | 388-119-00-0 |
| GS450 LTD | 389-119-00-0 |
| GS400 | 393-119-00-0 |
| GS400 LTD | |

# KAWASAKI EXHAUST SYSTEMS

The gravel, salt and tar don't want to hear about precision welding, electrostatic plating or quality control. The streets want to eat your pipes alive. DG PERFORMANCE's street exhaust systems chrome has the highest level of luster and brightness available today. And the good news is that they will hold that sparkle for many tomorrows.



KZ1000 SHAFT

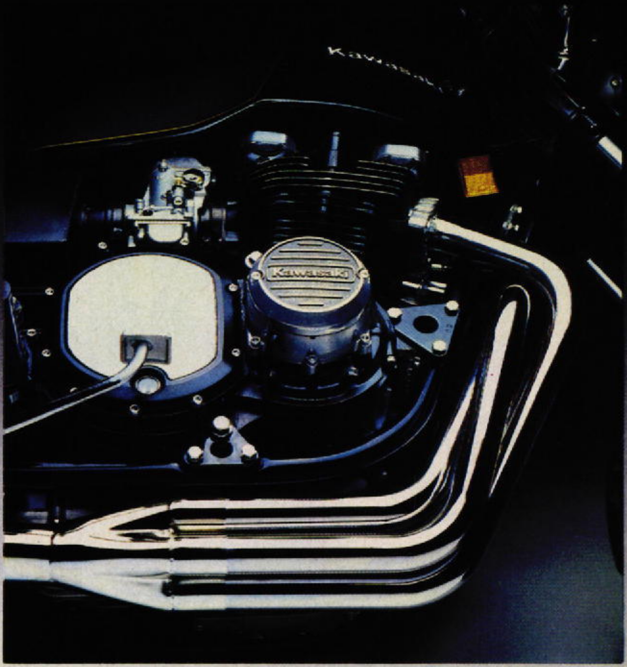


Tight and clean fit

KZ650

KZ 1300 touring

Styling doesn't mean a new disco chrome decal or tail fins on a '63 Eldorado. Useless innovation and fashion mag styling doesn't mean a thing if you can't get your oil filter off, have to drain the oil between the pipes or leave a trail of brown chrome around every bend. Function follows form at DG PERFORMANCE. DG street exhaust systems work well and look good.



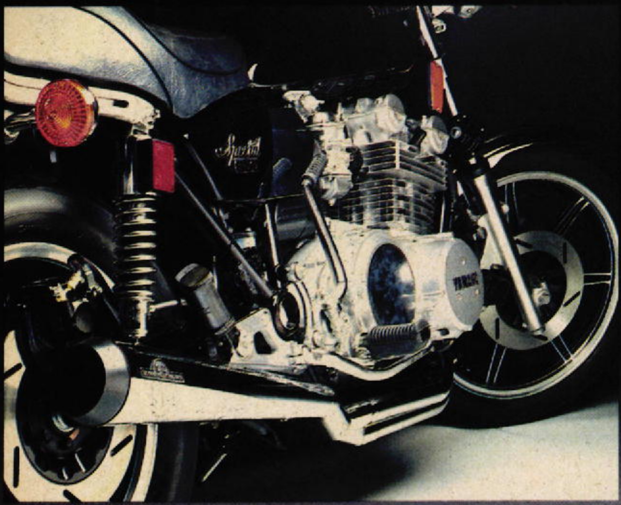
KAWASAKI

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| KZ1300 | 495-119-00-0 | KZ650 | 484-119-00-0 |
| KZ1000 | | KZ440 | 493-119-00-0 |
| SHAFT | 487-119-00-0 | KZ440 LTD. | 494-119-00-0 |
| KZ750 | 490-119-00-0 | KZ400 | 495-119-00-0 |
| KZ750 LTD. | 491-119-00-0 | Z400FX | 499-119-00-0 |

## YAMAHA EXHAUST SYSTEMS

DG has cut its teeth on competition machinery from Laguna Seca to Carlsbad. We've seen victory and defeat, and learned as much from the anguish as the joy. With this much research and development on the race tracks of the world we spend even more time on country roads, interstates and mean streets. We don't just put our name on the pipes, we put it on the road.

XS 11



XS 850

| YAMAHA | |
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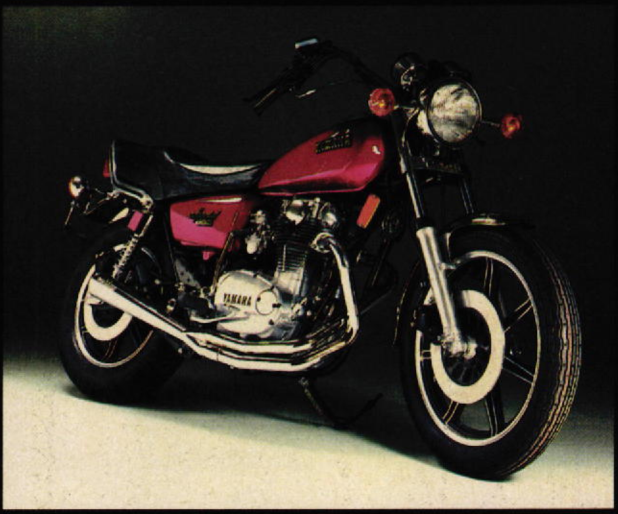
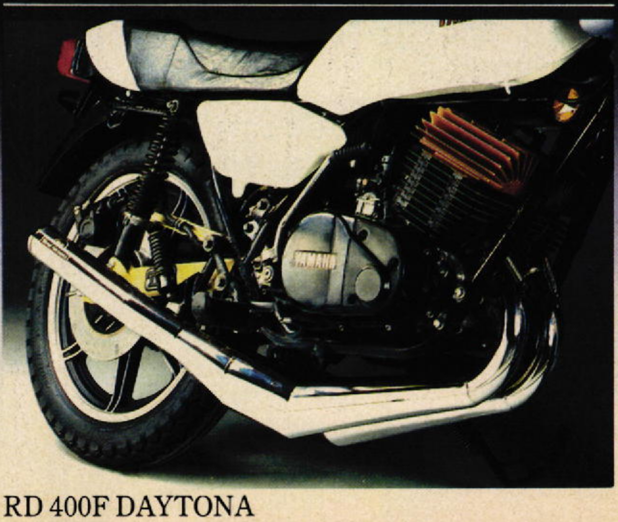
| XS-11 81 | 280-119-00-0 |
| XS-11 SPECIAL 81 | 281-119-00-0 |
| XS-11 79-80 | 262-119-00-0 |
| XS-11 SPECIAL 79-80 | 299-119-00-0 |
| XS-850 | 276-119-00-0 |
| XS-850 SPECIAL | 278-119-00-0 |
| XS-750 | 263-119-00-0 |
| XS-650 | 265-119-00-0 |
| XS-650 SPECIAL | 297-119-00-0 |
| 650 MAXIM | 282-119-00-0 |
| SR-500 CHROME | 267-119-00-0 |
| XS-400 | 283-119-00-0 |
| XS-400 SPECIAL | 284-119-00-0 |



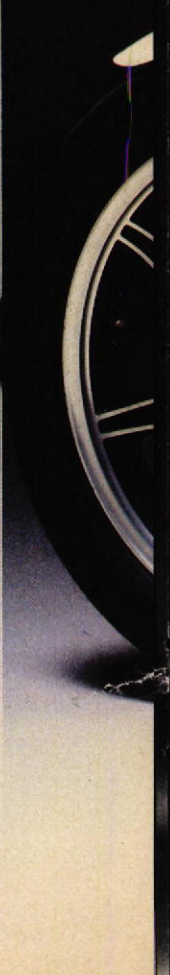
XS 650 SPECIAL

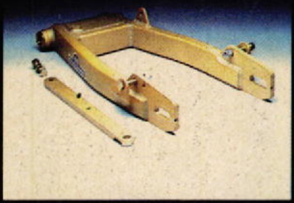
RD Yamahas are the last true street rocket. Government interference, EPA rules and industry compliance have neutered all the great two-stroke street bikes. The RD is a good thing, and DG PERFORMANCE products makes it better. DG's power products make the RD awesome to accelerate, but surprisingly controllable. DG offers a complete line of RD accessories from porting, pipes, ignitions, heads, air caps to swingarms.

*DG's custom-porting of your RD cylinders will compliment the performance gain of DG's pipes and heads to provide a top performance package. Includes polish and match of all ports. Modification to timing of exhaust and intake ports.*

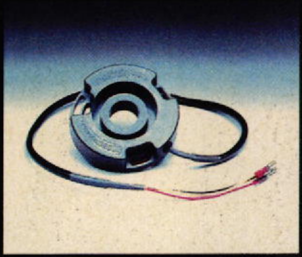


RD 400F DAYTONA

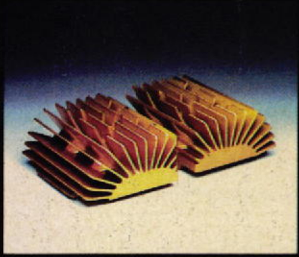




RD swing arms are one inch longer than stock and eliminate flex for improved handling and stability.
RD400 Daytona.
266-504-01-0
RD400
261-504-01-0
RD350/250
260-504-01-0

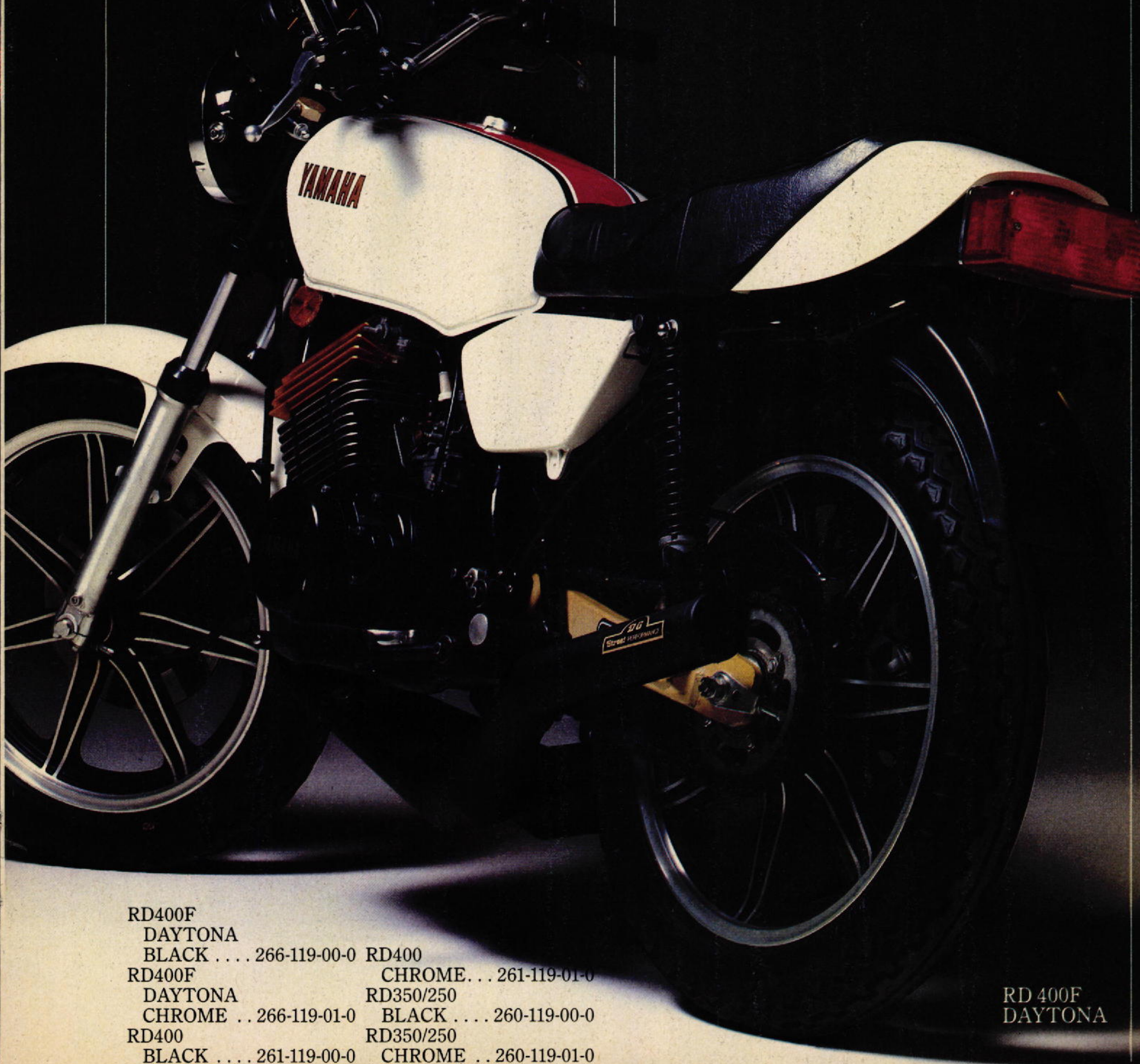


Mototek CDI is solid state, breakerless, electronic capacitance discharge ignition, get the racer's edge.
Mototek CDI . . . 260-245-00-0



DG high-compression heads brighten the performance of Yamaha's RD, increased cooling area which reduces head temperature to allow you to run harder, faster and longer.
RD400 . . . . . . . . 261-101-00-2
RD350 . . . . . . . . 260-101-00-2

DG air fork caps let you adjust the pressure of the front end on your bike with ease.
RD400 (All) . . . . 266-207-00-2
RD350/250 . . . . 260-207-00-2



RD 400F
DAYTONA

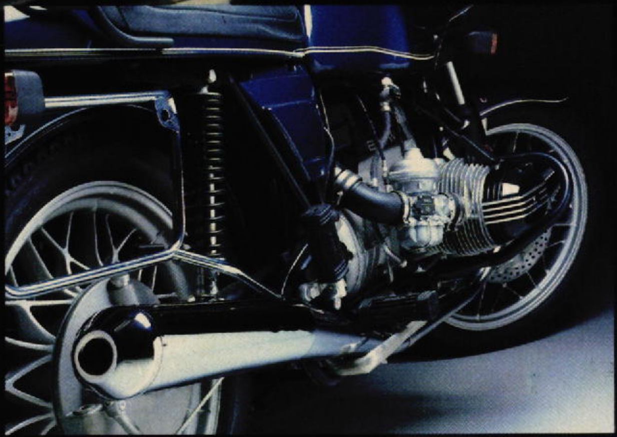
RD400F
DAYTONA
BLACK . . . . 266-119-00-0
RD400F
DAYTONA
CHROME . . 266-119-01-0
RD400
BLACK . . . . 261-119-00-0

RD400
CHROME. . . 261-119-01-0
RD350/250
BLACK . . . . 260-119-00-0
RD350/250
CHROME . . 260-119-01-0

## BMW MUFFLER REPLACEMENT

At DG we strive for the highest quality and workmanship in the industry. With precision welding and the best quality control you receive the finest exhaust systems that money can buy. The chrome finish on our systems has the highest level of luster and brightness available today.

If looks could kill, our BMW replacement mufflers would be staring down the smoking pipes of your beemer. DG PERFORMANCE SPECIALTIES knows a good thing when they see it, and BMW's stock mufflers are choice. DG PERFORMANCE also knows that looks are not only skin deep, unlike the OEM BMW mufflers, DG replica mufflers have a better finish, longer life and are rebuildable.



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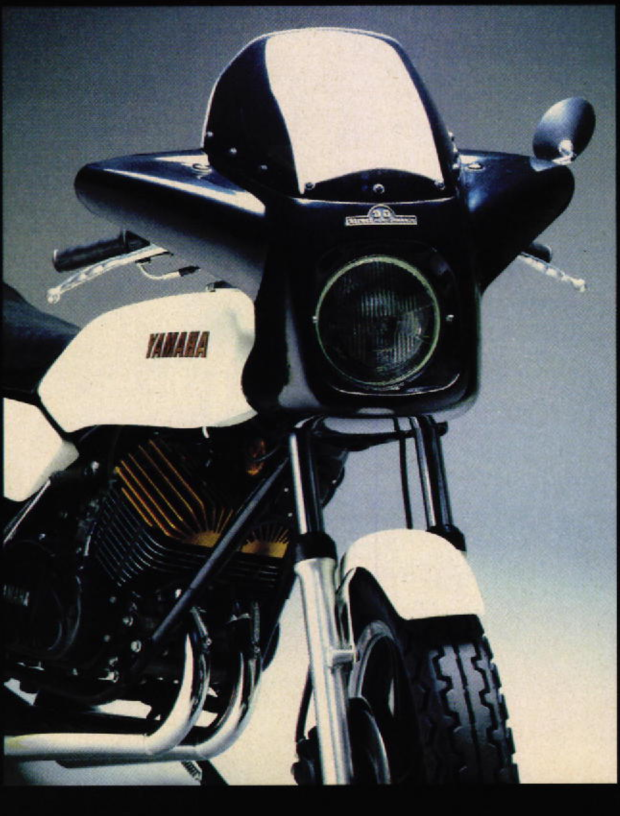

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## *MINITEST:*

# Honda XR250R

## *Miss Congeniality grows up.*

• Honda has fought hard against the XR250's reputation as a dirt bike for wimps and geeks, but it hasn't been very successful. The XR250 has languished in dirt-bike limbo since its introduction in 1979, caught in a marketing squeeze between the XR200, which weighs a lot less and produces only a little less power, and the XR500, which produces a lot more power and weighs just a little more. Drastic measures were called for, so while Honda was revitalizing the XR-line, it jacked up the XR250 engine and slid a whole new chassis beneath it. The result is more than just Miss Congeniality in the playduro beauty contest.

Just putting a bullet through the previous bike's pesky 23-inch front wheel and fitting a 21-incher makes the XR250R far more adept on the trail, but the major handling boost comes from the sophisticated chassis the 250 shares with the XR500R. Thanks to 2mm-larger stanchion tubes, upgraded triple clamps and tapered-roller steering-head bearings, the front end is far more rigid than before and affords another 1.5 inches of travel. Meanwhile, the Pro-Link rear suspension, with its rising-rate geometry and four clicks of rebound-damping adjustment (over a wider range than the CR-type Pro-Link) keeps the rear end from bounding out of control. On the whole, the suspension sends you the same signals as before, swallowing the bumps with a hydraulic *squish*, but the new XR keeps doing so at faster speeds. Terrain that used to make you close your eyes and pray can now be negotiated without the suspension bottoming viciously and producing a boogaloo into the bushes. The wheels feel pretty remote, and the handling is hardly crisp, but the XR250R coddles you during a long ride like few other bikes.

The most serious flaw in the previous XR250, however, lay in the engine. Throttle response had to be measured with a calendar, and that often proved difficult in narrow creekbeds and on rocky hills. So while the R-type engine's horsepower remains the same, the flywheel and gearbox have been recalibrated to make the motor more responsive. The flywheel has been lightened 10 percent and another cog has been added to the transmission. This six-speed gearbox is basically the same as the previous five-speeder but with the addition of a stump-pulling first gear. To accommodate the extra ratio, one of the engine's dual counterbalancers was eliminated, but the one remaining balancer still quells any weld-shattering vibrations. The bottom line is an engine that actually feels lively when you twist the new lateral-pull throttle, revving quickly to high rpm where the four-valve cylinder head operates at peak efficiency.

This injection of high-performance-think makes the XR250R a better choice than the handy TT250 or lightweight KLX250 for riders on the serious side of the playduro spectrum, but the R-type still isn't a two-stroke eater. You can't loft the front wheel over obstacles, and the weight penalty keeps you from performing much magic in tight sections. To make time on the trail, you wind the engine and let the suspension ward off the blows, resorting to the new double-leading-shoe front brake whenever the trail gets too twisty. The XR250R might not have as much power as the XR500, but it has enough grunt to scale sandy uphills, and you don't have to cope with the 17-pound weight penalty and the resultant higher center of gravity the 500 carries. Indeed, the new XR250R might not have achieved parity with two-strokes, but parity with the XR500R carries a certain measure of respectability. Enough to make Miss Congeniality a finalist in the four-stroke beauty contest, dirt-bike division.

*—Michael Jordan*

### HONDA XR250R

**Importer:** American Honda Motor Company
100 W. Alondra Boulevard
Gardena, California 90247

| | |
|---|---|
| Category | trail |
| Suggested retail price | $1798 |
| Engine type | four-stroke vertical single |
| Valve arrangement | single overhead camshaft, four valves per cylinder |
| Bore and stroke | 74.0mm x 57.8mm |
| Displacement | 248.6cc |
| Carburetion | one 30.5mm Keihin slide / needle |
| Gearbox | 6-speed |
| Front fork / wheel travel | air-spring, 37mm stanchion tube diameter 19.3 in. (236mm) |
| Rear shocks / wheel travel | Pro-Link, 4-way adjustable rebound damping, 10mm preload adjustment 111.0 in. (279mm) |
| Wheelbase | 55.5 to 56.5 in. (1410 to 1435mm) |
| Seat height | 36.0 in. (914mm) |
| Weight | 275 lbs. (125kg) |
| Warranty | 3 months |
| Available colors | red |

SCOTT
cycle guide
250R

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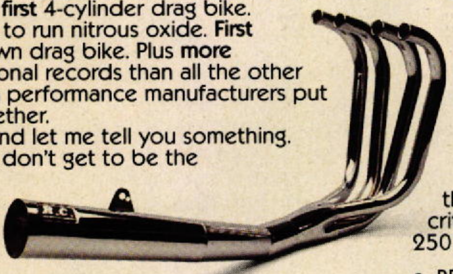
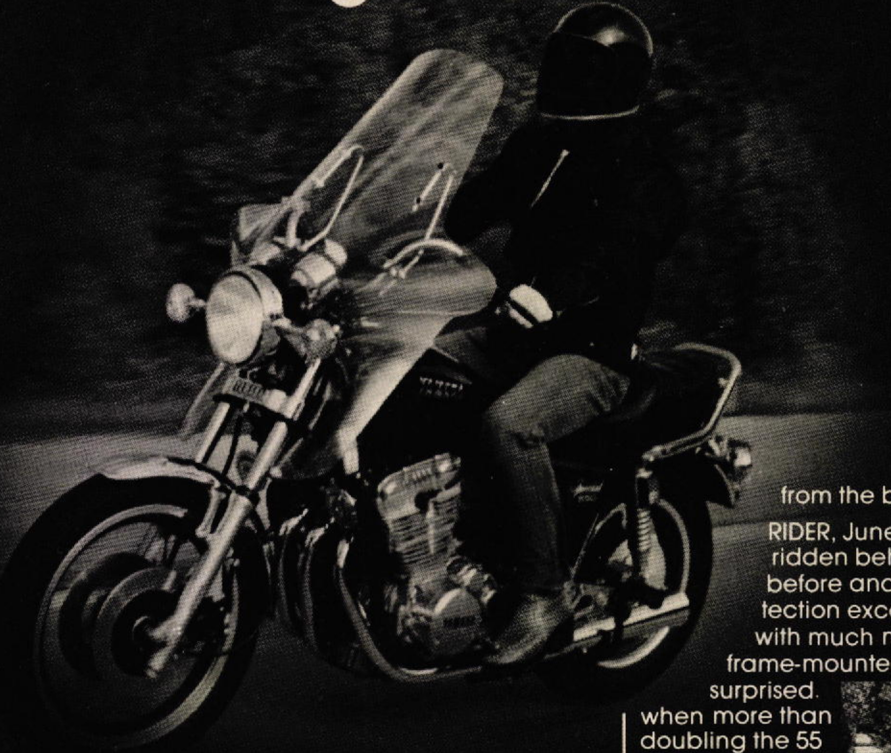
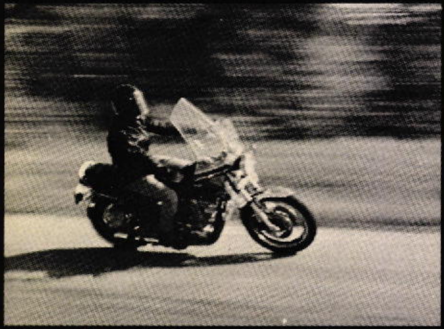


# SILHOUETTE
## The Fairing For the 80's



**"The fairing for riders who never liked fairings before."**

It used to be that most riders didn't like fairings because they added weight and a bulky, clumsy appearance to an otherwise trim and powerful looking motorcycle. Of course, these same riders have had to put up with a lot of discomfort due to wind chill and buffeting.



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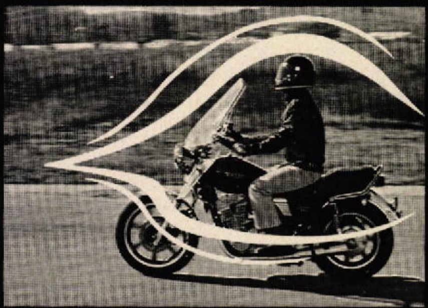
Then in 1975, we introduced the Silhouette and it quickly became known as the "fairing for riders who never liked fairings before". The Silhouette is light, (less than 9 pounds) and anything but bulky looking. In fact, from some angles it becomes practically invisible, and from any angle, the lines of the bike show right through.

The Silhouette fairing has a unique, patented cushion-mount system that absorbs road and bike vibrations to assure a long, trouble free life. It is manufactured from premium quality, 3/16" thick, cast acrylic in either clear or light smoke gray tint. There is a Silhouette model available to fit every road bike made.



**Silhouette sets closer to you, adjusts to your height, and extends lower to stop up-drafts.**

We could say nice things about ourselves all day, but you might be more impressed to hear it from the experts... the professional rider-writers from the bike magazines:

RIDER, June 1979—"I have ridden behind this fairing before and found the protection excellent, on a par with much more expensive frame-mounted models. Was I surprised when more than doubling the 55 MPH speed limit that I found the fairing had only a minimal effect on handling."

CYCLE WORLD, April 1979—"...the amount of protection is greater than any ordinary handlebar-mount fairing...where the difference is noticed most is around the kidneys and down low."

**Silhouette looks great...when you can see it at all.**

CYCLE, 1980 Annual Street & Touring Guide—"The Silhouette is finished with first class care and hardware. We recommend it if you're looking for both maximum protection and quality finish."

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## PRODUCT EVALUATION:

# CB750F Sport Control Kit

*For a command performance.*

• Most everyone around here agrees that the Honda CB750F knows how to handle itself around turns. What I mind, though, is the way it handles *me* around those turns. Although the 750F is a near-perfect bike for carving graceful backroad patterns, it lacks one ingredient a sportbike should have: a sporting seating position. It can make you feel like a size-L monkey riding a size-S coconut.

The 750F's ergonomics are more suited to American-style upright riding than to apex-clipping a curvey road. The 750F needs its footpegs positioned rearward about a notch or two, and a lower handlebar as well. Then you could hunch low on the bike, the way a sport rider should.

Here's the answer: Hondalines's Sport Control Kit. It's available through any authorized Honda dealer, and it bolts onto any 1980 or '81 CB750F. The kit retails for $153.50, and includes footpegs and rearset brackets, brake pedal, shift linkage, Euro-style handlebar and shorter throttle cables. There are also kits for the CB400T Hawk (1980 and '81 models) and 1979 and '80 CBX. These kits cost $142.00 and $165.00, respectively.

You might expect that the rearset footpegs give so much additional cornering clearance that you'll scrape elbows before any of the bike's hardware grinds. Forget it. The replacement pegs are elevated only one half-inch higher than the stock pegs. But that's okay, since the F-type enjoys plenty of lean angle already. The main feature you'll like about the Sport Control Kit pegs is that they are placed about three inches aft of the OEM footrest position so you can stretch out across the tank like a roadracer.

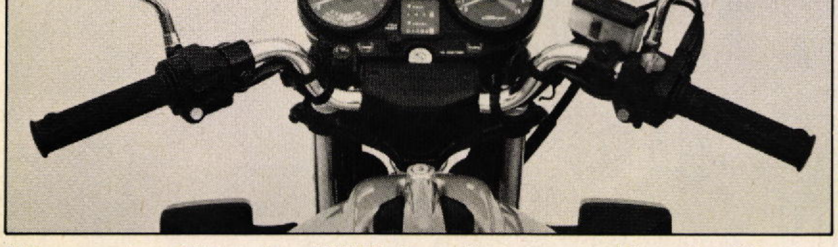
Just because you're draped over the gas tank doesn't mean you have to have wrists like Popeye to hold yourself on the saddle. The ergonomics are agreeable for around-town stoplight tag as well as sport riding. I put several hundred urban miles on our kitted 750F, and never got tired from the repli-racer riding position.

But frankly, the most fun I had with the Sport Control Kit bike was zooming through my favorite canyon road. That's where the peg/seat/handlebar relationship, which is similar to the Team Honda Superbike I rode last fall, became a real joy. The major difference between the racer and the kitted F—other than that street bike didn't pin my ears back—was the seat. The stocker's perch is soft, while Spencer's Superbike throne did everything it could to remind me that roadracers are expected to be he-men.

Since the handlebar height is lower than the antenna-like bar on the stocker, you can keep your weight closer to the bike's center of gravity. And by doing that, the bike seems more responsive to your movements in the turns. Further, the lower handlebar lets your arms act as shock absorbers, so you can better feel how the fork and tire behave in turns.

But you shouldn't concern yourself with the scientific method of the Sport Control Kit so much as how it makes you feel on the bike. And in that respect, you'll appreciate it, because it enables you to take command during those playful romps through the turns. For a sport rider on *any* bike, that's important.

—*Dain Gingerelli*



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 VIC HUBER

**Riders-eye view of Kit-equipped CB750 shows the narrower and lower handlebar**

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## TRACK TEST:

# Suzuki RM125X

*A World Champion becomes the class champion again.*

BY DAVID DEWHURST

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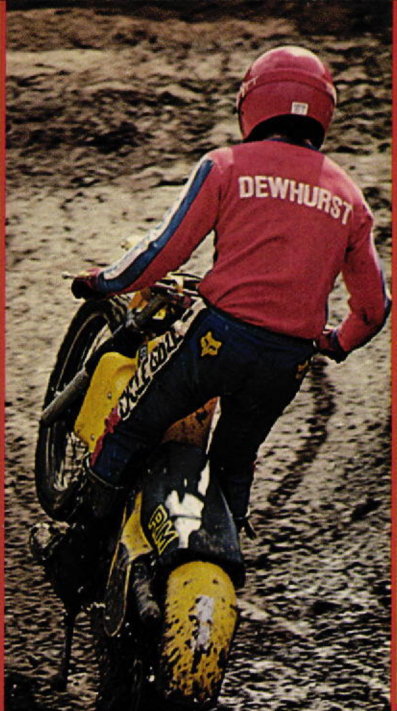


Suzuki's new water-cooled RM125X has come a long, long way from the first cobby-looking RM125M back in 1975. Yet both motorcycles have a lot in common: They were both winners from Day One. The original air-cooled model immediately won sales—and races—and in its inaugural year Gaston Rahier boosted the RM image with the first of Suzuki's six consecutive 125cc world championships.

Soon the 125 RM was a classic, and by its second year the little RM had become the largest-selling model in the Suzuki line. World championships continued to roll in as both Akira Watanabe and Harry Everts dominated the Grands Prix. And at home the production RM125 had become the *only* bike to own. But while factory bikes continued to dominate, production RMs began to lose their winning edge. What was once the only bike soon became just one of many motorcycles a winning racer could ride.

It's ironic that in 1980, when Suzuki won its first national 125cc championship, RM production bikes were finally knocked off the top of the most-wanted list at local tracks around the country. Apparently caught off guard by this sudden fall from grace, Suzuki set about a rush program of development on an entirely new model. The twin-shock air-cooled bike had reached the end of the development line and looked outdated against the latest single-shock opposition. So Suzuki developed its Full Floating Suspension during one year on the U.S. National circuit, while world championship bikes continued to ride to victory on twin-shock designs. That suspension development caused many delays for the production bikes, but the new water-cooled motor was less of a problem. Factory riders had already ironed out early troubles and Suzuki had a sound air-cooled motor on which to base the waterpumper.

The resulting production bike reflects the Grand Prix experience and modern technology that made the first RM such a screaming success. And already, after only a few short weeks in competition, the new water-cooled RM is once more proving to be *the* machine to own.

*Continued*

# RM 125X: Tech Inspection

## Engine:

**Top End:** Suzuki's new waterpumper is mechanically similar to, but shares precious few parts with, previous RMs. This year's piston has thicker Keystone-style rings for longer life. Cylinder-to-piston clearance is fractionally reduced because the '81 RM's water cooling is more efficient than the air cooling on last year's RM. A five-percent increase in compression, up to 8.5:1, gives some added power, but porting changes account for the majority of the X-model's power boost. A 32mm Mikuni now feeds a wider reed cage that uses six fiber petals instead of four steel petals. Flow is also increased through a 2.5mm-taller inlet port. Conversely, the exhaust port is lowered 0.5mm from 1980 spec. Each of the three transfers on either side of the barrel has its top edge at a slightly different level so that the ports open one at a time rather than all at once as on most other two-stroke engines. Suzuki claims better scavenging from this design.

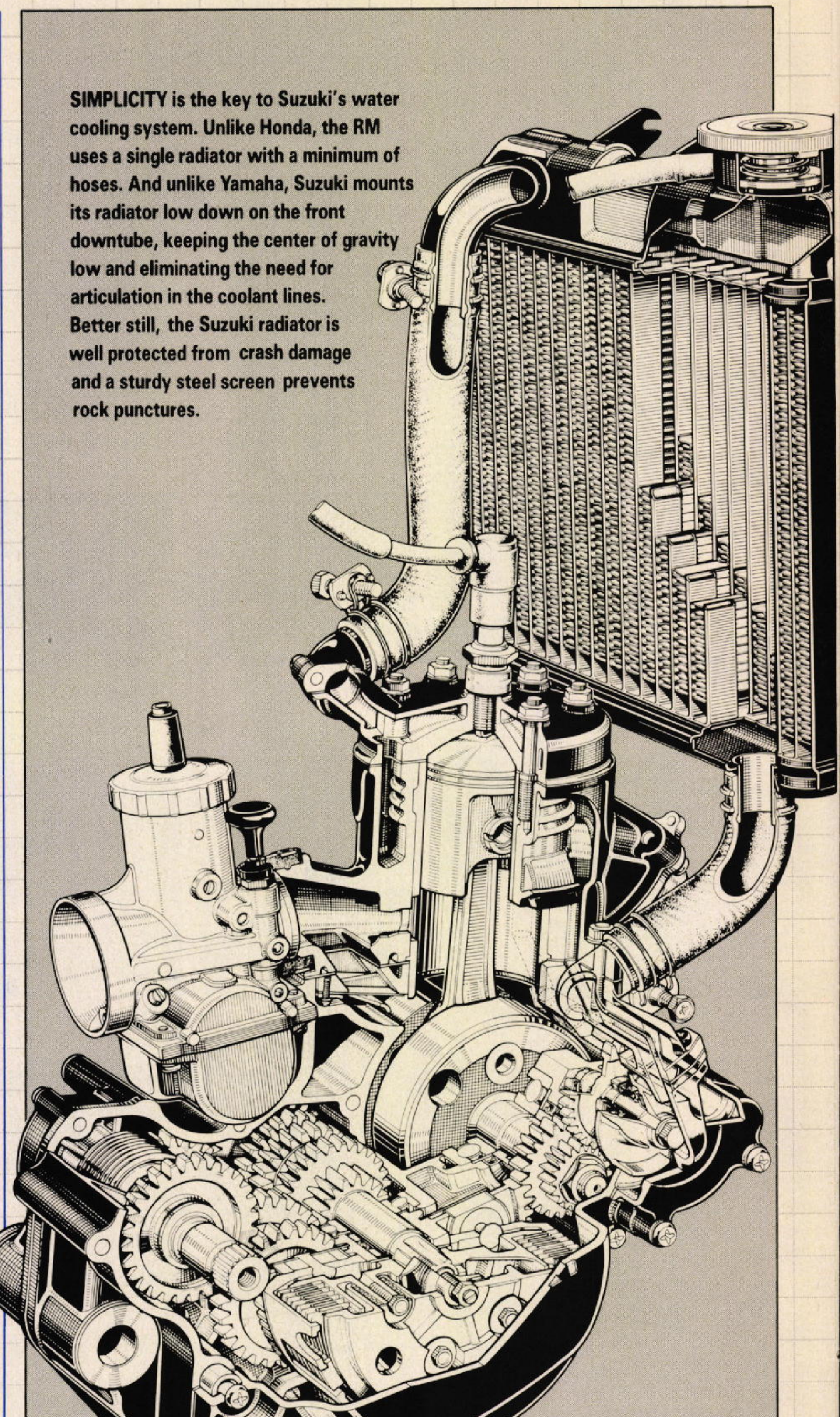
**Bottom End:** The new RM crank has a considerably greater mass than last year's and uses a different shaft taper to accommodate the water-pump drive gear. The tiny pump impeller spins at one-half engine speed, recirculating 980cc of coolant (a 50/50 solution of water and antifreeze) every six seconds at 9000 rpm. The cooling system runs at 15.7 psi and a frame-mounted radiator maintains an average temperature of 127 degrees centigrade.

## Drivetrain:

**Primary drive:** Almost identical to last year's, but Suzuki now uses a pushrod-operated clutch similar to the unit in the RM250. The clutch also has two more plates, making a total of 13. Internal gear ratios are identical to last year's, but the gears themselves are made of a higher-grade nickel-molybdenum steel. Internal gear dimensions also differ to accommodate new shafts. The countershaft is 0.5mm longer and the mainshaft is completely hollow to house the clutch pushrod, rather than hollow only at one end as it was in 1980.

## Suspension:

**Front:** Our test fork had less wheel travel—10.8 inches instead of 11.2



**SIMPLICITY is the key to Suzuki's water cooling system. Unlike Honda, the RM uses a single radiator with a minimum of hoses. And unlike Yamaha, Suzuki mounts its radiator low down on the front downtube, keeping the center of gravity low and eliminating the need for articulation in the coolant lines. Better still, the Suzuki radiator is well protected from crash damage and a sturdy steel screen prevents rock punctures.**

inches—than last year's RM. Suzuki's fork now uses two Teflon bushings to reduce stiction. The factory no longer recommends any static air pressure in the fork and has increased the spring rate from 203 kg/mm to 311 kg/mm to compensate. Rebound damping is reduced 24 percent. The right slider leg now has a four-bolt axle clamp for increased fork rigidity.

**Rear:** Suzuki's Full Floating Suspension System (see related story, page 66) uses a single Kayaba shock with four rebound-damping settings and spring preload infinitely adjustable within a 22mm range. The shock and its linkages pivot on Teflon-coated Heim joints while the aluminum rocker arm rides in caged needle bearings. Wheel travel is identical to last year's twin-shocker, with 11.7 inches of movement.

## Frame:

The chromoly frame retains a single front downtube, but now splits into the two engine-cradle tubes much closer to the steering head which is fractionally steeper than last year's. Trail is also reduced to quicken the steering. Suzuki now applies the unusual combination of a tapered-roller bearing at the bottom of the steering head to absorb high shock loads, and a ball-type top bearing that helps maintain a light steering feel. The pivot axle for the box-section aluminum swingarm now doubles as a rear engine mount.

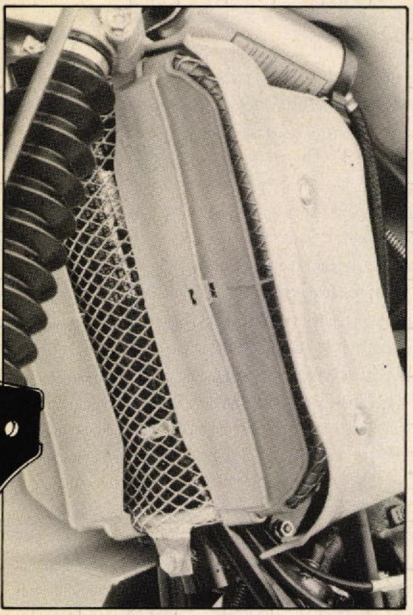
## Wheels:

A new full-width rear hub and a conical front hub have 20-percent less brake swept area and a different shoe material. The hubs use heavy, straight-pull spokes laced to Takasago rims shod with either IRC or Bridgestone tires.

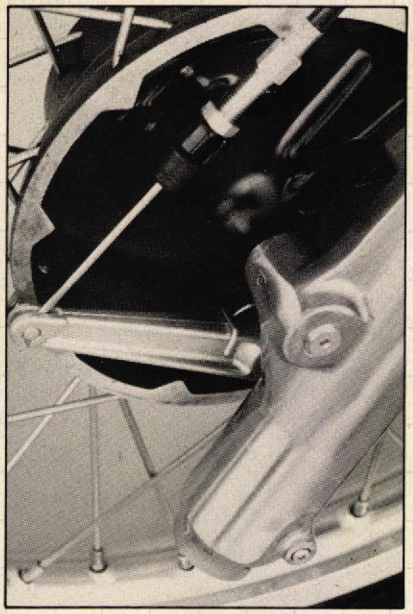
## Details:

Softer chain rollers and a solid swingarm-mounted chain guide are claimed to reduce noise and increase chain life. Twin vertically-mounted two-stage air filters are each mounted on either side of the shock and connected by a common plenum chamber. Snap-on plastic louvers provided with each bike are recommended at muddy events to keep the radiator from getting clogged.

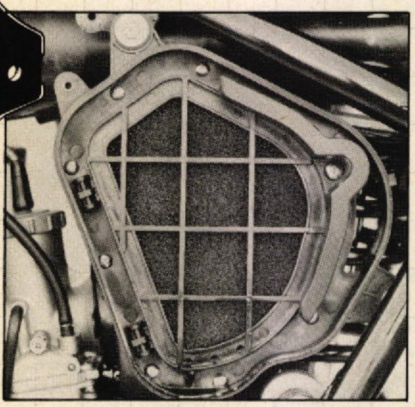
*Continued*



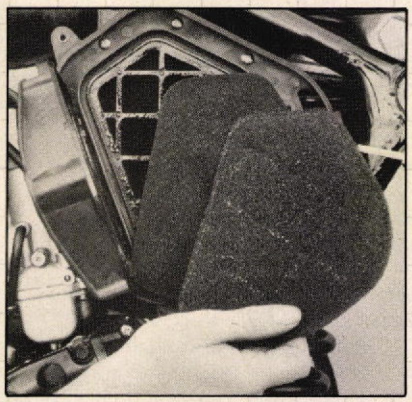
Wire mesh protects radiator from major damage and snap-on louvers deter mud



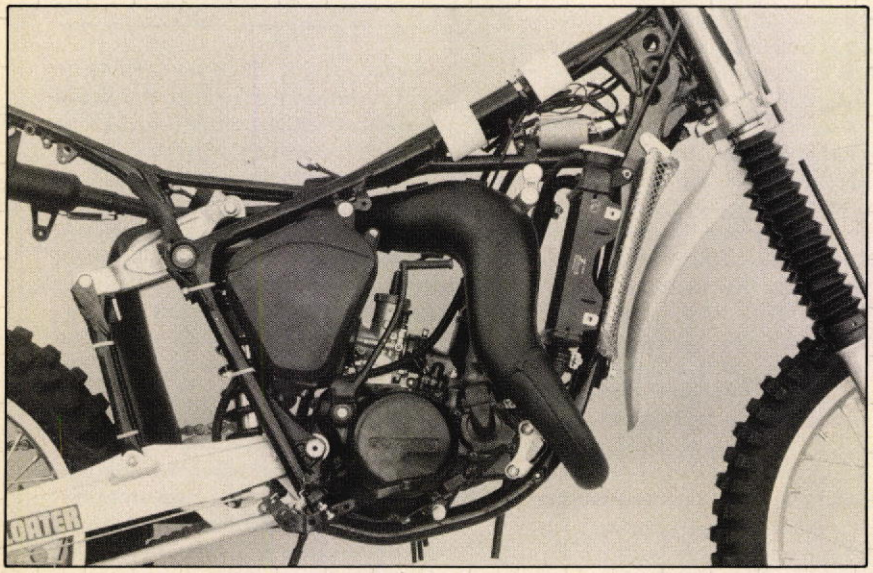
Rugged conical front hub is laced to equally strong straight-pull spokes



Air filtration is efficient but ten screws and hinged flaps complicate service.



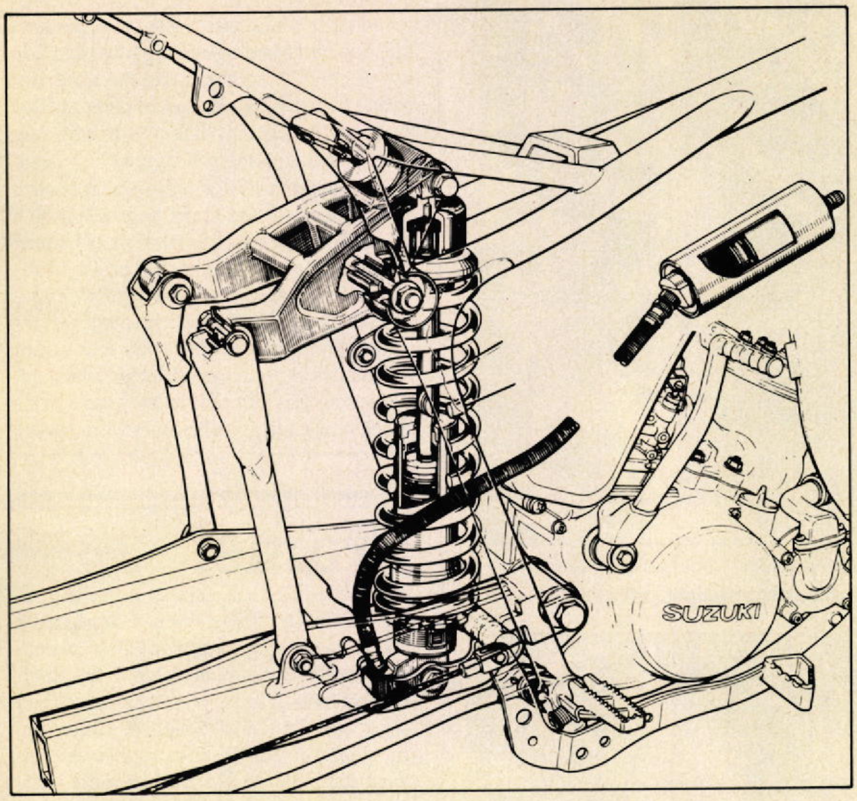
Two pieces of flat foam filter air on either side of a common airbox



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 VIC HUBER

A naked chassis shows the now familiar single-shock layout of the rear suspension and the unusual routing of the exhaust to clear the downtube-mounted radiator

# Full Floater: Playing Both Ends Against the Middle



• Traditionally, the two words you see emblazoned in yellow on the RM125X's alloy swingarm have referred only to a certain kind of rear brake. But from now on, your unabridged glossary of moto-nomenclature will have to list another meaning for the term "Full Floater," for that's the name chosen by Suzuki to christen its entry into the fast-growing field of single-shock rear suspensions.

Full Floater seems an appropriate name, though, because neither end of this system's lone shock absorber is bolted directly to the frame. So in a manner of speaking, the shock just sort of *floats*. Not that it can drift around in the chassis at random; its movement is dictated by a linkage system that, for the most part, resembles Kawasaki's Uni-Trak arrangement. It involves a hefty under-seat rocker arm whose aft end connects to the swingarm via a pair of vertical struts, with the forward end hooked to the top eyelet of the shock. Thus, when the swingarm moves upward, it causes the rocker to pivot and force its forward end downward, thereby compressing the shock.

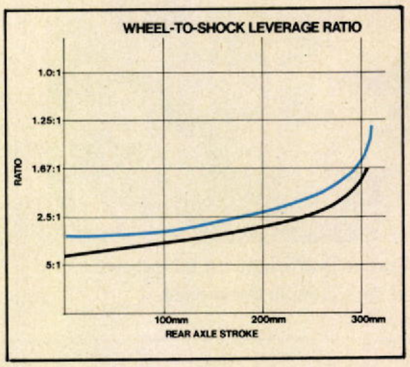
With the Full Floater, however, the bottom of the shock isn't mounted to the frame like on the Uni-Trak; instead, the RM's aluminum-bodied Kayaba damper bolts to the swingarm just ahead of the rear tire. Meaning that when the wheel hits a bump, the rocker pushes the top of the shock downward while the swingarm forces the bottom of the shock upward. The shock, therefore, gets compressed from *both* ends instead of just one as with other motorcycle rear suspensions.

Naturally, all of this results in a rising-rate suspension, even though Suzuki's tech people insist that mounting the shock on the swingarm had little to do with achieving it. This design was implemented, they explain, because it makes the bottom of the shock also move rearward as it climbs upward during the compression stroke—the significance being that this change in the shock's attitude helps keep the operating angle between the rocker arm and the shock shaft closer to the ideal of 90 degrees as the rocker sweeps through its relatively tight arc. The claimed benefit is a reduction in fore-and-aft loads on the shaft that could cause it to cock and bind in its bushings.

This sounds reasonable enough, of course, but it also seems likely that a few other factors greatly influenced the decision to use a swingarm-mounted shock. For one, Suzuki's design *had* to be different from Uni-Trak to avoid a legal confrontation with Kawasaki over Japanese patent rights; what's more, patents on numerous linkage-type rising-rate suspensions had already been issued in the U.S. as well. Kawasaki had circumvented that last obstacle by biting the bullet and *not* incorporating rising rates into Uni-Trak, even though that defeated the main reason for having a linkage-type suspension in the first place. And Suzuki—even as you read this, a defendant in a patent-infringement lawsuit over the Full Floater—allegedly has claimed that by virtue of its unique shock-mounting system, it hasn't violated any U.S. patents.

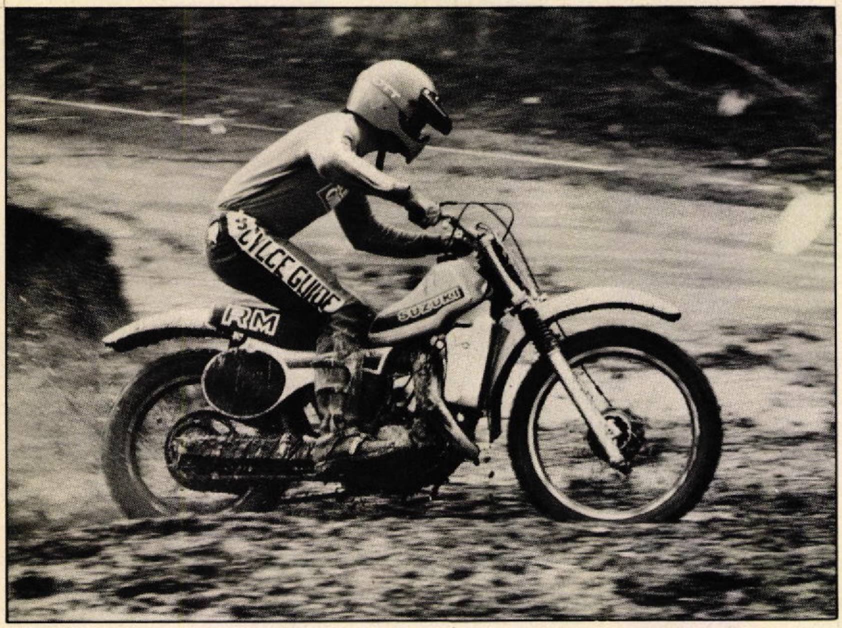
As important as that lawsuit might be to Suzuki, however, the motocrossing community's major concern is over how well the suspension fares on the tracks, not in the courts. And in that regard, the Floater is right up there with Honda's CR125R Pro-Link at the front of the one-shock pack. The RM is a little firmer during its initial stages of travel than the CR, and it's considerably stiffer toward the very end. But in between, the progression curves of the two systems are about the same. The biggest difference, aside from the obvious, is that the RM has a lower wheel-to-shock leverage ratio, thereby requiring a longer-travel shock and a much softer straight-rate spring.

Still, despite their apparent sophistication, neither rear suspension is as effective as the twin-shock Ohlins setup found on new Husqvarnas. And perhaps that draws the real bottom line on all single-shock variations as they exist right now: On paper, they all seem far more efficient than any twin-shock system could ever hope to be, just as certain one-shock designs have built-in advantages that should render them superior to others. But at this early stage in rising-rate evolution, it's not theory or potential that makes one system better than another, it's how well that system has been executed.



In Suzuki's case, that execution is admirable, but flawed. Because until there is not even *one* dual-shocker that can out-suspend these new-wave rising-rate systems, including the Floater, single-shock rear suspensions will remain as much sales gimmicks as they will performance features. *—Paul Dean*

# RM 125X: Will it Win?



• Grand Prix breeding shows through in every part of Suzuki's RM125X. And every one of those parts works together as well on the RM as they do on its GP cousins. One ride will be enough to convince you that it is this perfect balance, a harmony between so many parts, that gives the GP bike, and now the production RM, an edge over the competition.

The RM motor alone typifies how Suzuki has molded unspectacular pieces into a remarkable whole that works better than anything else in the class. It may not have a sheer horsepower edge over the competition, but the RM will win a low-rpm race against anything its own size.

By 125-class standards the RMX is a torquer. Indeed, it has enough midrange punch and a throaty enough exhaust note to convince many people that it is just a slow 250 rather than a very fast 125. You can get it off the pipe, but you almost have to do so deliberately rather than it being a fact of 125cc life.

This extra power boost not only makes the RM easier to ride, it also makes the bike faster. Out of turns you can roll open the throttle at low rpm and be greeted by power *and* traction, when most high-rpm screamers either bog or spin their wheels. And because you don't have to concentrate as hard to keep the motor revving in the powerband, you have time to concentrate on more important tasks.

You won't have to waste much effort keeping the motorcycle on the racetrack, either, for the RM has an uncannily safe feel at speed. The action of the new fork is silky smooth and it consumes large and small holes alike. The floater rear suspension works very well too, although it doesn't offer the same supple feel as Pro-Link or even a Husky twin-shocker. In fact, the new rear end feels similar to the old twin-shock RM until you hit The Big One. Then you notice that the Floater really has an appetite for rough tracks.

Unfortunately, the Full Floater does too good a job of preventing bottoming. The combination of the stiffish stock spring and the rapidly rising final rates in the rear geometry makes it impossible to use all of the travel in any normal situation. By slightly reducing the nitrogen pressure in the remote reservoir we did improve the action in the final inches of wheel travel. But the real answer will undoubtedly come with the lighter optional spring that Suzuki will soon have available.

Despite this criticism we still rate the RM at the top of our list of high-speed handlers. And we were impressed by its low-speed manners, too. Whether in berms, ruts or smooth turns the Suzuki had impeccable steering. It didn't matter where we pointed the bike, it just seemed to find the right line all by itself. It was as if the RM knew instinctively what to do, and got on with the job without bothering the rider.

Few motorcycles give so much rider assistance, and that is what makes the Suzuki better than its competition. All of Suzuki's Grand Prix experience has been carefully channeled into a production motorcycle that has more ability than most of the people who will ever ride it. The RM may not be perfect, but by present production-model standards this GP replica is the best bike in the 125cc class.

*—David Dewhurst*

# Ride Review

• From a performance standpoint the new RM125 is superb. It handles well and is the fastest 125 I've ever ridden. The Full Floater suspension felt a bit stiff on fast washboard surfaces and easy whoops, but it generally kept the bike tracking straight over rough terrain at speed.

What really annoyed me, though, was not how the RM performed on the track but how poorly the airbox was designed for maintenance. Servicing four different air cleaner elements split between two compartments, all held in place by a handful of screws, washers and spacers is hardly appropriate on a racer, where ease of maintenance is critical.

But face it: Suzuki always seems to build the best 125, and since performance is the bottom line on any race bike, this new RM is going to be the bike to beat once again. *—Mark Diotte*

• First thing tomorrow morning, I'm taking my micrometers back to Sears for a refund. They're way, *way* off, and the reason I know about it is that I just measured the bore and stroke of the RM125X, and those so-called "precision" instruments gave me readings that calculated out to a total displacement of 123cc.

Listen, I know better than to believe *that!* I mean, can a measley 125 power out of a turn when it's off the pipe and still have enough poop to break the tire loose—without fanning the clutch, even? Can a 125 hang with a lot of 250s on a fast straight? Can a 125 that's geared tall do killer *second*-gear starts?

No way! But this bike can, and that's why I don't believe it's a 125. It's a cheater, a 200, maybe, or at least a 175.

Yep, my mikes are shot, all right. Or maybe my calculator. . . . *—Paul Dean*

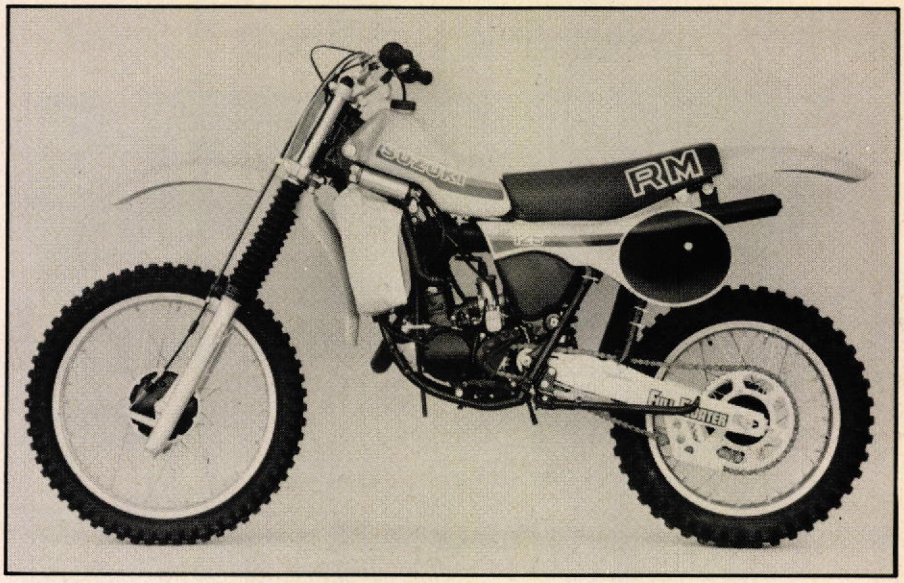
• Suzuki continues to mine a mother lode of hp in its 125cc engine. And the Full Floater suspension puts that power on the ground. The result is a fast motorcycle.

But fast is all this bike is. Hairpin turns call for a wrestling match, and sweepers find you trying frantically to richochet off a berm. To ride the RM well, you tip-toe through the crooked bits, aim the bike down the straights and then gas it as long as you dare. You can minimize the RM's peculiar clumsiness this way, but no riding technique can eliminate it. Indeed, the bike even feels awkward on the straights as it hobby-horses over the whoops.

Whenever the straights are long, the RM will win races. But in the close quarters of a 125-class duel, the Suzuki will get squeezed out. No matter how fast it leaves the gate, I'd just as soon be aboard something else by the time the first turn arrives. *—Michael Jordan*

*Continued*

# Suzuki RM125X



## SPECIFICATIONS:

**IMPORTER:** U.S. Suzuki Motor Corporation
3251 East Imperial Highway
Brea, California 92621

**CATEGORY:** motocross

**SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE:** $1579

### ENGINE

| | |
|---|---|
| Type | liquid-cooled two-stroke vertical single |
| Port arrangement | one piston-controlled intake, one reed-valve-controlled intake, six transfers, one exhaust |
| Bore and stroke | 54.0mm x 54.0mm |
| Displacement | 123.6cc |
| Compression ratio (corrected) | 8.5:1 |
| Carburetion | one 32mm Mikuni slide / needle |
| Air filter | twin dual-stage washable oiled foam elements |
| Lubrication | pre-mixed fuel and oil |
| Starting system | primary kick |
| Ignition | internal-rotor magneto CDI |
| Charging system | none |

### DRIVETRAIN

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary drive | straight-cut gears; 3.158:1 ratio |
| Clutch | wet, multi-plate |
| Final drive | #520 chain (5/8-in. pitch, 1/4-in. width); 4.250:1 (12/51)ratio |

| Gear | Internal gear ratio | Overall gear ratio | MPH per 1000 RPM |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | 2.333 | 31.316 | 2.4 |
| II | 1.750 | 23.487 | 3.2 |
| III | 1.422 | 18.947 | 4.0 |
| IV | 1.190 | 15.977 | 4.7 |
| V | 1.005 | 14.031 | 5.4 |
| VI | 0.957 | 12.838 | 5.9 |

### SUSPENSION/WHEEL TRAVEL

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | air-spring, 38mm stanchion tube diameter / 10.8 in. (273mm) |
| Rear | Full Floater, 22mm spring preload adjustment, 4-way adjustable rebound damping / 11.7 in. (297mm) |

### BRAKES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | drum, single-leading shoe |
| Rear | drum, single leading shoe, straight-pull cable-operated |

### TIRES

| | |
|---|---|
| Front | 3.00 x 21 IRC Motocross ZMarkII |
| Rear | 4.10 x 18 IRC Motocross ZMarkII |

### DIMENSIONS AND CAPACITIES

| | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 205 lbs. (93kg) |
| Weight distribution | 47.7% front, 52.3% rear |
| Wheelbase | 57.0 to 58.0 in. (1448 to 1473mm) |
| Seat height | 37.0 in. (940mm) |
| Handlebar width | 32.0 in. (813mm) |
| Footpeg height | 17.0 in. (432mm) |
| Ground clearance | 13.3 in. (338mm), at engine cradle |
| Steering head angle | 29.5 degrees from vertical |
| Front wheel trail | 4.80 in. (121mm) |
| Frame | tubular chromoly steel, single front downtube |
| Fuel tank | plastic, 1.7 gal. (6.5l), no reserve |
| Instrumentation | none |

**WARRANTY:** none

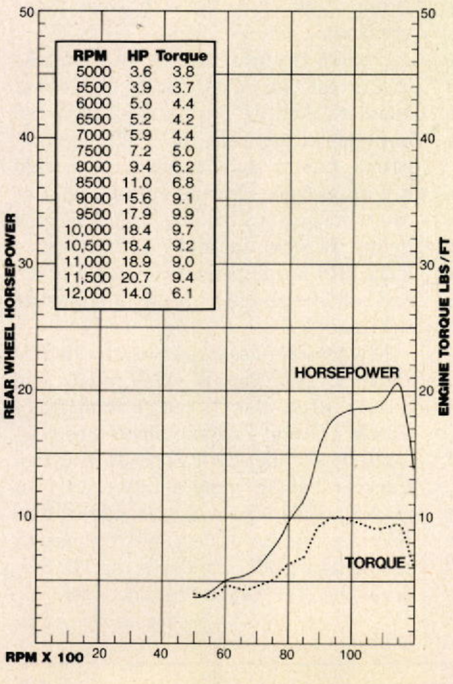
**AVAILABLE COLORS:** yellow

All weights and measurements are taken with machine unladen and fuel tank empty.

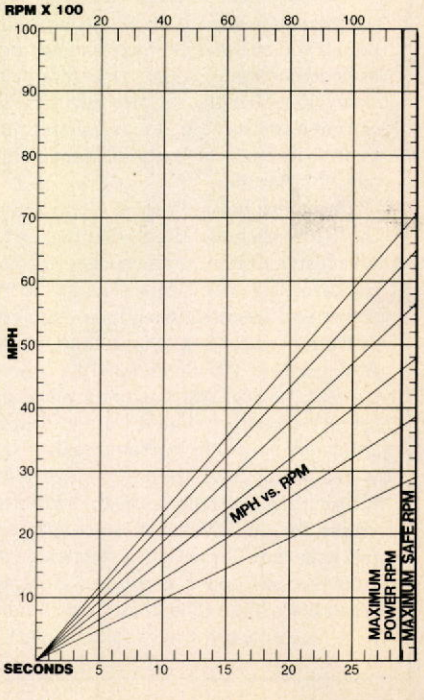
## COMPARATIVE TEST DATA:

| Make & Model | Horsepower | Wheel Travel Front/Rear, in. | Weight (fuel tank empty), lb. | Weight bias Front/Rear percent | Transmission, number of speeds |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Suzuki RM125X | 20.7 | 10.8/11.7 | 205 | 47.7/52.3 | 6 |
| Suzuki RM125T | 19.8 | 11.2/11.7 | 200 | 47.0/53.0 | 6 |
| Kawasaki KX125 A7 | 20.9 | 10.4/11.3 | 207 | 48.0/52.0 | 6 |
| Honda CR125R-'81 | NA | 10.6/11.5 | 213 | 46.7/53.3 | 6 |
| Yamaha YZ125E | 15.9 | 9.3/9.1 | 198 | 48.7/51.3 | 6 |
| Husqvarna 125 CR-'80 | 18.8 | 11.8/11.8 | 214 | 43.9/56.1 | 6 |

## PERFORMANCE:



| RPM | HP | Torque |
|---|---|---|
| 5000 | 3.6 | 3.8 |
| 5500 | 3.9 | 3.7 |
| 6000 | 5.0 | 4.4 |
| 6500 | 5.2 | 4.2 |
| 7000 | 5.9 | 4.4 |
| 7500 | 7.2 | 5.0 |
| 8000 | 9.4 | 6.2 |
| 8500 | 11.0 | 6.8 |
| 9000 | 15.6 | 9.1 |
| 9500 | 17.9 | 9.9 |
| 10,000 | 18.4 | 9.7 |
| 10,500 | 18.4 | 9.2 |
| 11,000 | 18.9 | 9.0 |
| 11,500 | 20.7 | 9.4 |
| 12,000 | 14.0 | 6.1 |



# "MARTY'S BEEN DIGGIN' IN THE DIRT FOR YEARS. NOW WE'VE STRUCK GOLD."

Marty Moates, LOP privateer and '80 USGP winner with Laurens Offner, LOP team-owner and manager.

"Whoopdeedoo!

Contrary to popular belief, it doesn't take factory big bucks and factory works bikes to win motocross races.

Marty Moates, the former unknown privateer, and I are proof. And now that we've hit paydirt and been discovered, out of self-preservation as his sponsor I've discovered a little something to help keep us on top.

Gold.

ND's Hot U Gold Palladium spark plugs. They're a real spark of genius. A great combination of ND's patented, U-grooved ground electrode and a super-thin, gold palladium/copper center electrode.

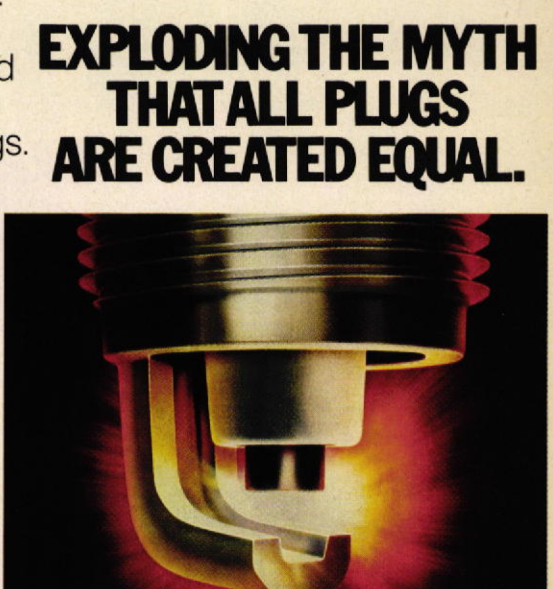
If that sounds too technical, the results are easily understood.

CONVENTIONAL PLUG HOT U

Hot U Gold palladiums mean less build-up from oil deposits and faster burn-off of what does normally build-up. Plus, these high-performance ND's require less voltage to fire. So you get faster starts and easier, more consistent combustion all race long.

That's why, from now on, my money's riding on ND. And everytime I send Marty in after the gold, he'll be taking a little with him."

## EXPLODING THE MYTH THAT ALL PLUGS ARE CREATED EQUAL.



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A great motorcycle should be judged with the eye as well as the stopwatch.

HONDA
G. MOPUS-S703
BRIDGESTONE

The quarter mile might tell you how fast a motorcycle can move, but there's something it can never tell you.

How much a motorcycle can move you.

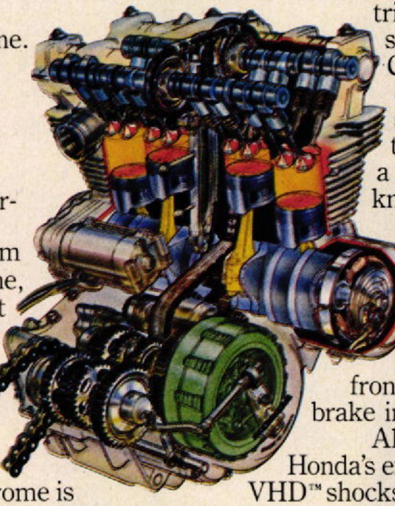
Honda presents the 1981 CB750 Custom, one of the most beautiful motorcycles to ever roll out of the showroom.

Or into the fast lane.

## Chrome on the range.

This is a shining example of how a motorcycle should look.

The CB750 Custom is a symphony of chrome, from the gleaming front fender to the glowing taillight.

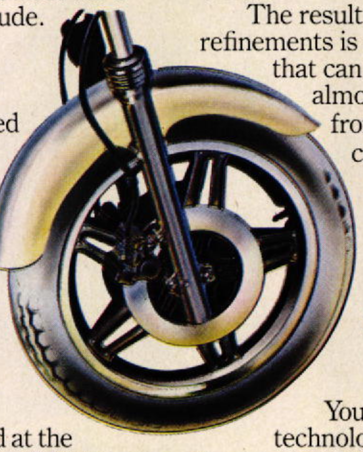


*Perhaps the most advanced custom 750 on the road.*

And what isn't chrome is the deepest richest paint you've ever seen on a production machine. In fact, to get two-tone paint like this, you either buy a Honda Custom or you buy a custom paint job.

But underneath all this dazzle, don't be surprised if you discover a slightly aggressive attitude. The CB750 Custom rides on clean lean ComStars™ and big fat tubeless tires with raised white letters.

Like a muscle car on two wheels.



*Rakish new leading axle forks with dual disc brakes.*

## Lean back and enjoy the performance.

Now you've arrived at the most beautiful part of the CB750 Custom.

Riding it.

The handlebars and footpegs let you lean back comfortably instead of hunching forward.

The saddle sinks you down to just 29.9 inches off the ground. So you don't have to stand on tip-toe at stoplights.

Stretching out in front, the new leading axle fork gives you more than a rakish look. It's air adjustable, so you can tune it to load and road conditions. The ingenious offset triple steering clamp system lets this Custom retain almost exactly the same steering geometry as the Honda CB750F, a motorcycle well-known for its ability to straighten curves.

And because stopping is as important as going, there are now dual disc brakes in the front and a brawny drum brake in the back.

Also in back, Honda's exclusive VHD™ shocks offer you five spring preload settings – from limousine plush to road racer stiff.

And a swing arm pivot fitted with needle bearings reduces flex in tight corners.

The result of these refinements is a motorcycle that can handle almost anything from a hairpin curve to a double S. Luxuriously.

## Even its muscles have muscles.

You're looking at the technological cousin of Honda's famous superbike racers.

It features 749 cc's of four-stroke, four-cylinder power, complete with high tech touches like no-maintenance transistorized pointless ignition, double overhead cams, multiplate cam chains and a forged crankshaft with Kelmet racing bearings.

Inside the cylinder heads, you'll find Honda's unique Pentroof™ combustion chambers. With a direct valve system that reduces maintenance and four valves per cylinder, instead of two, to reduce valve float and improve breathing at higher rpm's.

Which translates into considerably more power at higher rpm's.

And to make sure you get all that power, smoothly and without waiting, the four 30 mm CV carburetors are fitted with an accelerator pump for quick, crisp throttle response.

Just roll it on.

## Tricks and treats.

The CB750 Custom is beautiful in big ways.

It's beautiful in small ways, too.

This year there's a quartz halogen headlight and new trick instrument lighting that doesn't just light up. It glows. Vibration-absorbing passenger footpegs. There's even a vacuum operated fuel petcock that you never have to remember to turn on or off.

But this is just the icing on the cake. Without a single gadget, this motorcycle combines pure beauty with brute force so well that you don't know whether to polish it or polish off the competition.

The CB750 Custom.

A moving experience even when it's standing still.

**HONDA**

**FOLLOW THE LEADER**

ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET AND EYE PROTECTION. Specifications and availability subject to change without notice.
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Arai
30
CHAMPION
TAYLOR WHITE
Racing

**Singleton and Champion: Daytona's winningest combination.**

If it's consistency you're looking for in a bike racer, look to Dale Singleton. His recent win at the Daytona 200 Motorcycle Classic on a Champion-fired Yamaha TZ-750 earned him his second outright victory in the world's richest bike event and an astounding overall finishing record: first in 1979, second in 1980, and first in 1981.

It's no surprise Dale Singleton's consistency is matched by his spark plugs. Champion's famous for being up front at the checker. In fact, no other brand comes close in major race wins.

Looking for consistent performance from *your* machine? Look to Champions. Just like Dale Singleton.

Photos by Jerry B. Howard

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RIDE AWARE. SHOW YOU CARE.
MOTORCYCLE INDUSTRY COUNCIL, INC. MC

# SPORT LINES

*Cycle Guide's True Tales of Race Courses, Dark Horses and Machines at Speed*

EDITED BY JEFF BURTT

# Dale and Pops are Tops

*Surviving, Singleton-style; A legend lives on.*

30
GOODYEAR
TAYLOR WHITE Racing
Arai

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## The Telling 200

• When Dale Singleton took the checkered flag on lap 52 of the Daytona 200, thus completing his 800th mile on the 3.87-mile road course since 1979, he didn't raise his hand in an automatic victory salute. Instead, the 25-year-old native of Dalton, Georgia sat up, rolled off the throttle and ever-so-carefully nursed his TZ750 through turns One and Two. Then, on the short infield straight, at a prudent speed, with the bike upright, he raised his left arm, thumb up, and flashed the grin of joy and relief he would carry with him to Victory Circle.

1981 DAYTONA 200
76

© 1981 RICH CHENET

It was there the reason for his caution became evident, although the moment was almost lost amid the emotional celebration of the Georgia contingent over Singleton's record-breaking third consecutive top-two finish. His front Goodyear slick was missing large chunks of rubber, and patches could be peeled from its carcass with a fingernail.

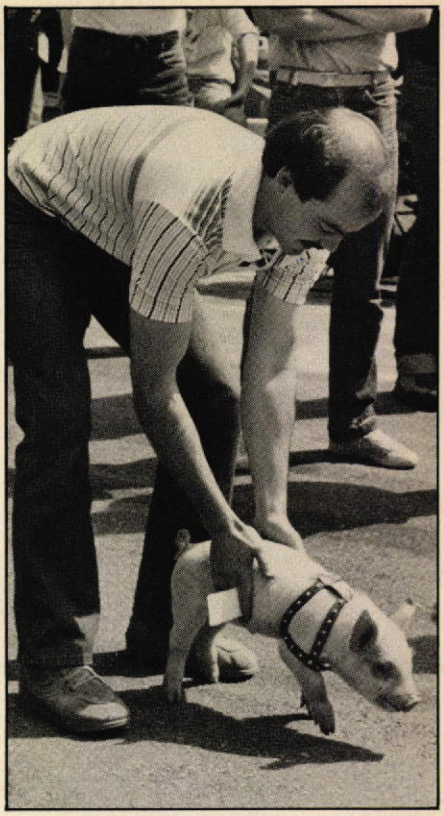
"Yeah," he said when confronted with the evidence, "the last few laps I was braking maybe 100 yards early for turn One—and I was still almost losing the front end. I think I

*Continued*

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 PATRICK BEHAR

**Singleton (30) vs. Fontan, Beaulieu vs. Gauloises, finished one-two**

*An overshot pit at Gas Stop II sealed the Frenchman's fate.*



**Here's a tip on starting, Elmer**

*Yeah, but where's the mudhole?*

finished the race with more gas in the tank than rubber up front," he joked; victory was especially sweet.

And fortunate, as it usually is in the 200. Taking nothing away from Singleton—who, in addition to his 1–2–1 finishes in the Big One the past three years, logged 200 practice miles in tire-test sessions at the track just prior to this year's race—the big guns, not unexpectedly, shot themselves out of the con-

KERKER KICKS ASS!

*The Kerker KR Series of Racing Superbike Pipes. The Supreme Power-Performers. Exhaustively proven so by hours of demanding tests on track, strip and dyno by the authorities of exhaust, Kerker's R & D test team. Then further proven in competition useage by Kawasaki's Factory AMA Superbike Road Racing Team. Exclusively choosing Kerker as their exhaust system for the past three seasons, the pace setting leadership of these supermachines demonstrated the advanced power and performance available by bolting on a Kerker. Now, after witnessing the proof first hand, Kerker KR units are specified by the Kawasaki Factory racing teams in the United States, France and Japan.*

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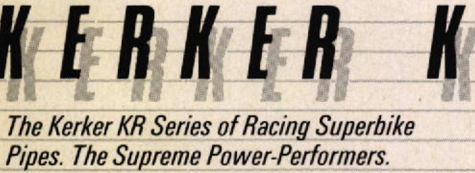

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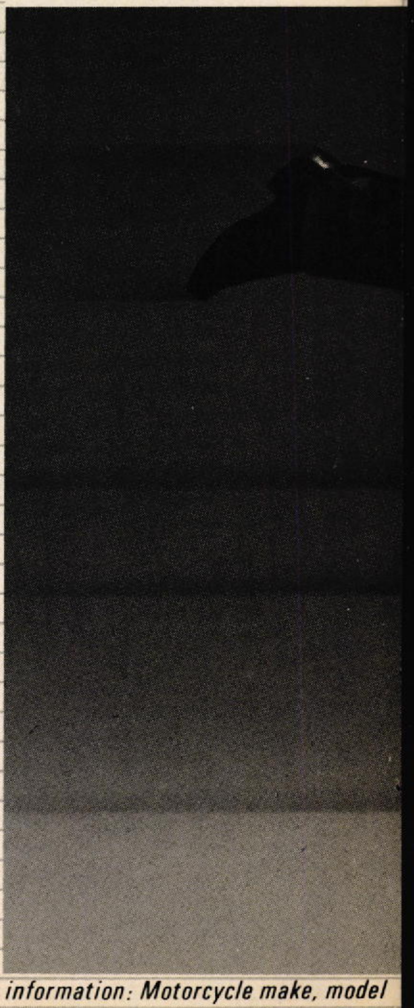
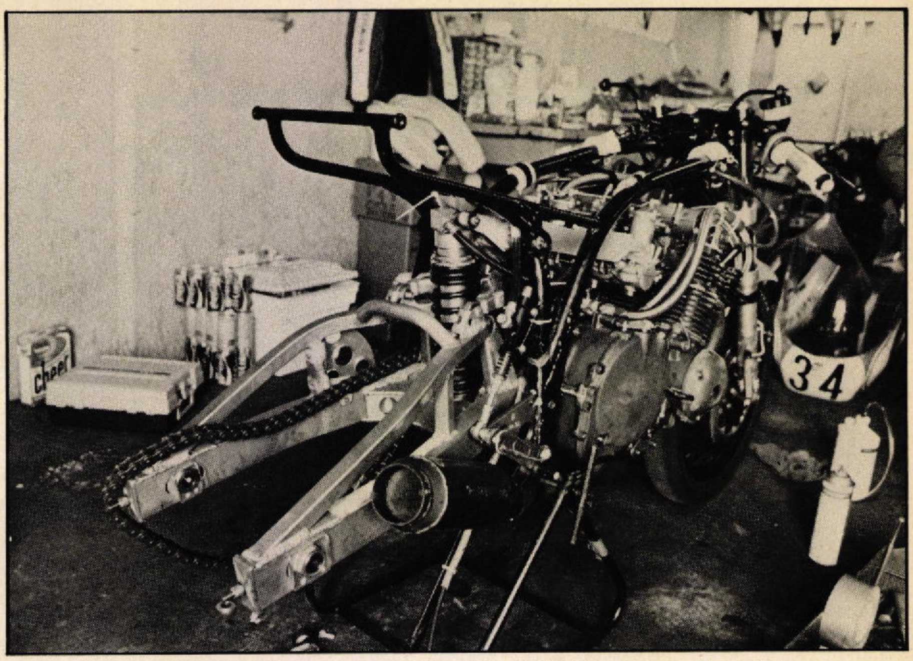


test early, leaving the race if not to the swift, at least to the strong.

Kenny Roberts, the pole-sitter, exited on lap three with sticking carburetor slides that were attributed, quite creatively by Yamaha team manager Ken Clark, to a faulty AMA tech inspector. Graeme Crosby, last year's Superbike winner, left on lap 10 with gearbox trouble on his Suzuki Formula One four-stroker. (His teammate, Wes Cooley, would join him on the sidelines by lap 25 with a broken camshaft.) Freddie Spencer, who led the first 16 laps on his CB900F-based Honda Formula One bike, blew the engine on lap 17. The 200 is often a war of attrition; the winner is often the best survivor.

**Wes Cooley took the holeshot**

*But was finished at the halfway point.*

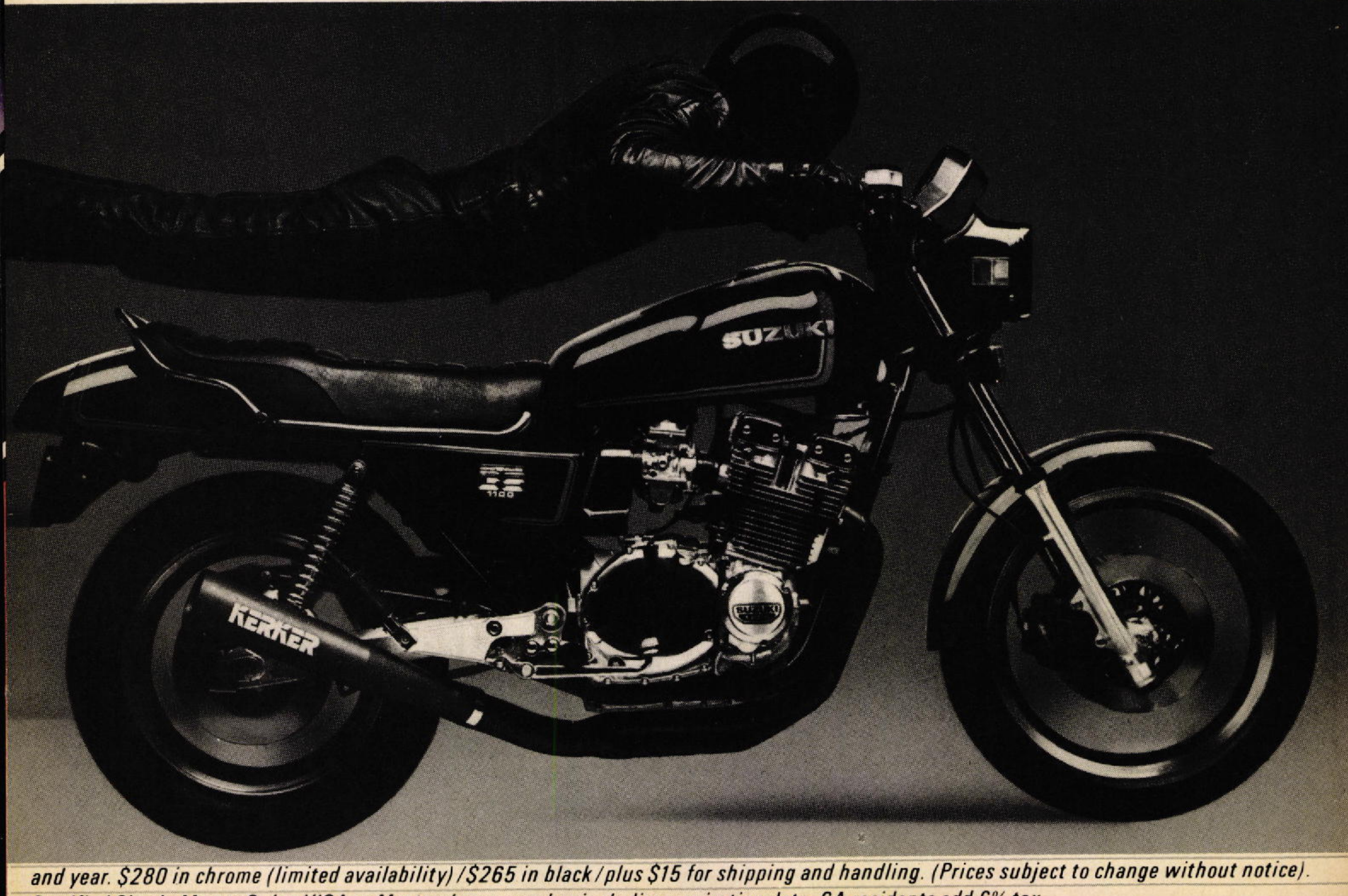


**Loud end of the Yoshimura/Suzuki Formula One shows Full Floater with short links**

*No Cheer on Sunday, but their twice-shocking Superbikes were fine on Friday.*

A handle, by the way, that fits Dale Singleton. "I just let the other guys set the pace while I lay back and sort out my plans," said the rider, who calculated the demands of the

Continued



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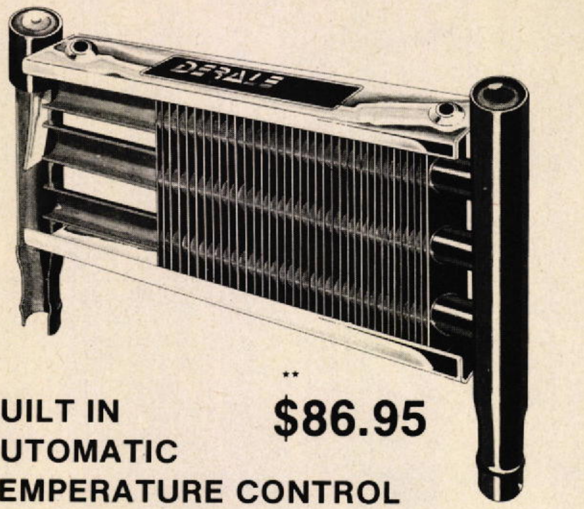

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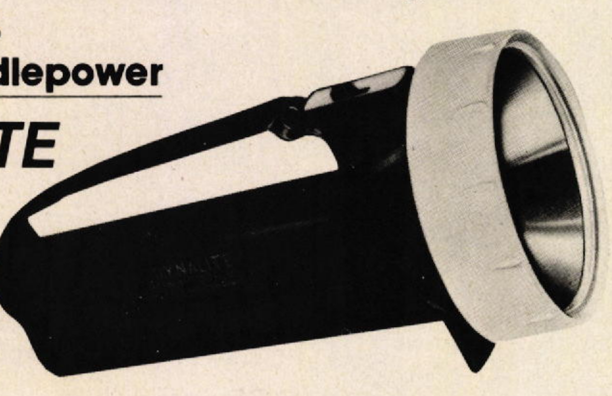

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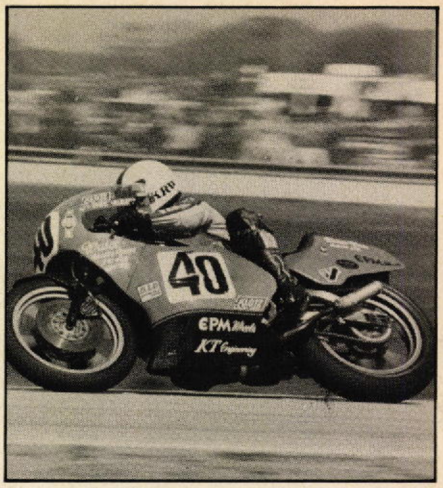


**Aldana, dem Bones, was a solitary fourth**

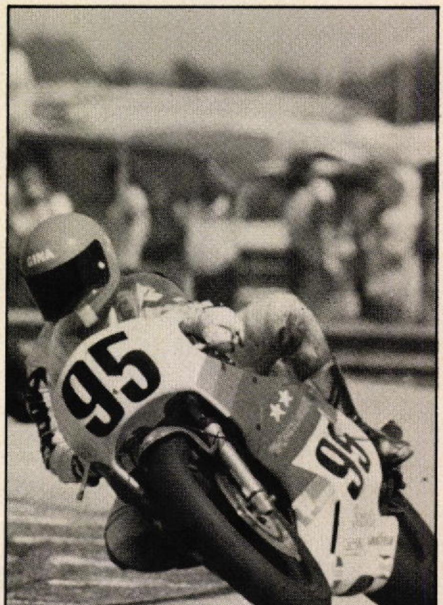
*Tough job, but somebody had to do it.*

Big D as craftily as, say, Richard Petty. In fact, the significance of Petty's win at the NASCAR Daytona 500 just three weeks before—where King Richard eyeballed three faster cars from fourth place and then outfoxed them all with a hasty gas stop at the 450th mile—was not lost on Singleton.

"I stayed in sight of the leaders," he said. "I ran the race I wanted to. If you're in the hunt after the second (and last) gas stop, that's when the real racing comes down."

He meant, of course, the real surviving. For, as it turned out, during the final 17 laps after that last gas stop—all of which he led—Singleton enjoyed a 20-second cushion over second-place finisher Marc Fontan.

Rich Schlachter inherited the lead after Spencer's retirement, with Singleton and Fontan—the European Endurance roadrac-



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**Gina Bovaird, first woman to qualify, 1980**

*And first to finish, 1981.*

*Continued*

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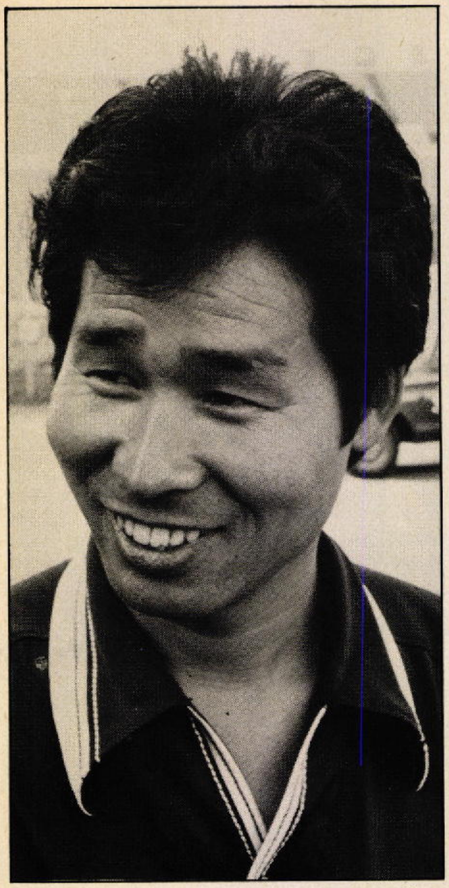
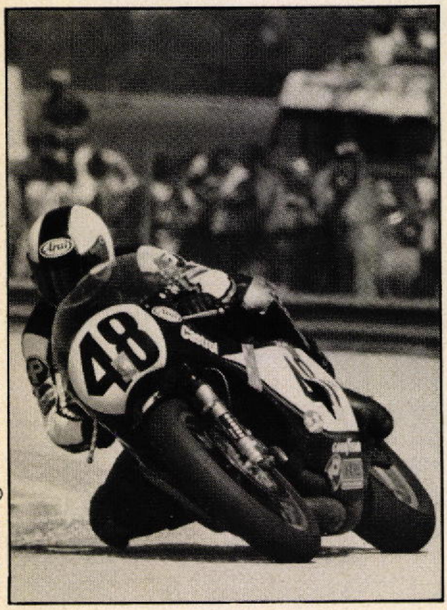


**Mamoru Moriwaki's KZ was top four-stroke**

*Eleventh, with Wayne Gardner aboard.*

ing champion—dueling for second the next 20 laps. But Schlachter fell back (he finished third) after losing second *and* third gears, and Fontan overshot his pit at Gas Stop II to give Singleton the bulge he needed. Dave Aldana rode a rock-solid and lonely final 100 miles to finish fourth.



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**Schlachter gummed his way to third**

*Rich was minus two gearbox teeth.*

*Continued*

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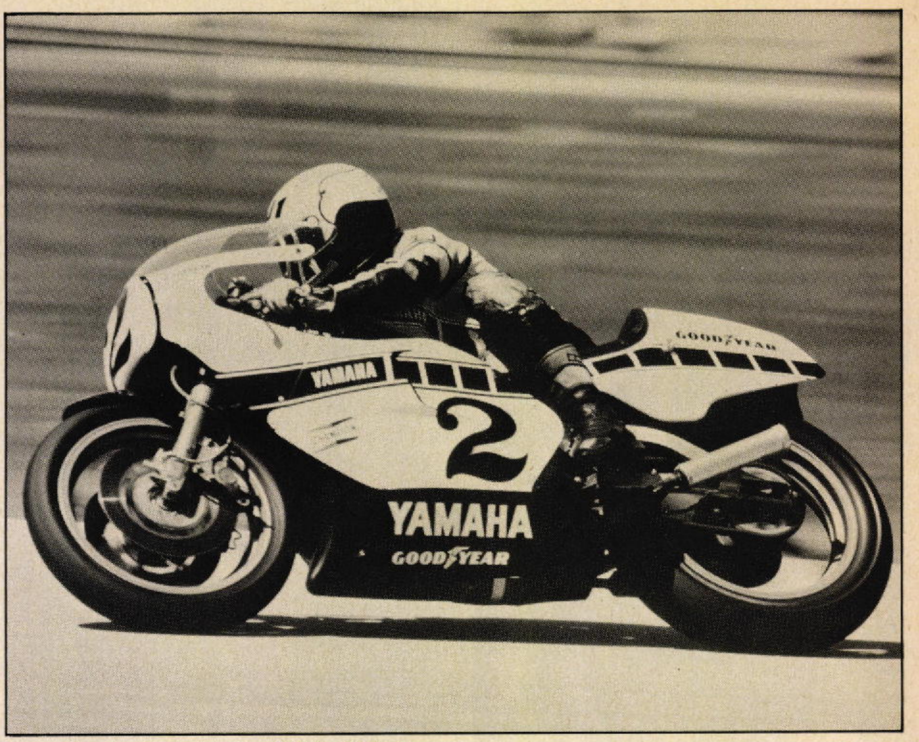


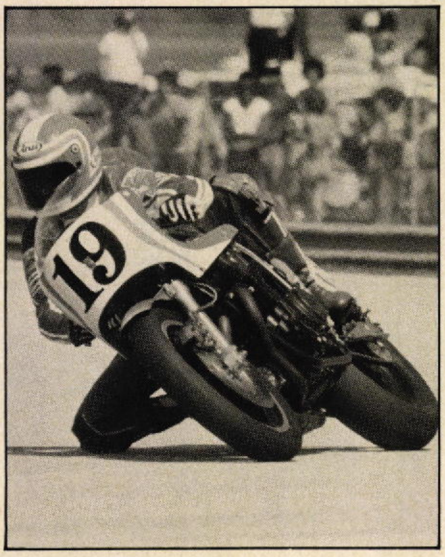
**In practice he sizzled, in the 200 he fizzled.**

*Was Kenny Roberts' Daytona jinx a dastardly plot by the AMA?*

Holding his ubiquitous mascot, a pig named Elmer III, on high in Victory Circle, Singleton thanked his sponsors, Taylor White and Beaulieu of America (the rug-, not the wine-maker), and gave special kudos to his Australian tuner, John Redding. "Things went so smoothly this week, the only time I got my hands dirty was washing Elmer," said Singleton.

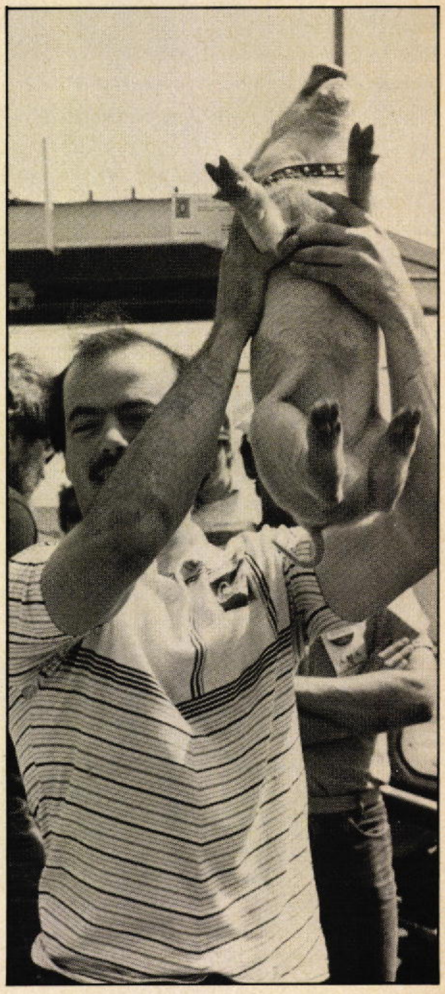
"Well," he added, climbing down from the camera stand, "I guess I'd better go count my $20,000."

With purse ($15,000), lap and contingency monies, he had made at least that much. Nice wages, for surviving. —*Jeff Burtt*



**Spencer, in practice, sans full-fairing**

*He blew it in the Main.*



**Squeal for the cameras, Elmer III**

*Excuse me, my hands need washing.*

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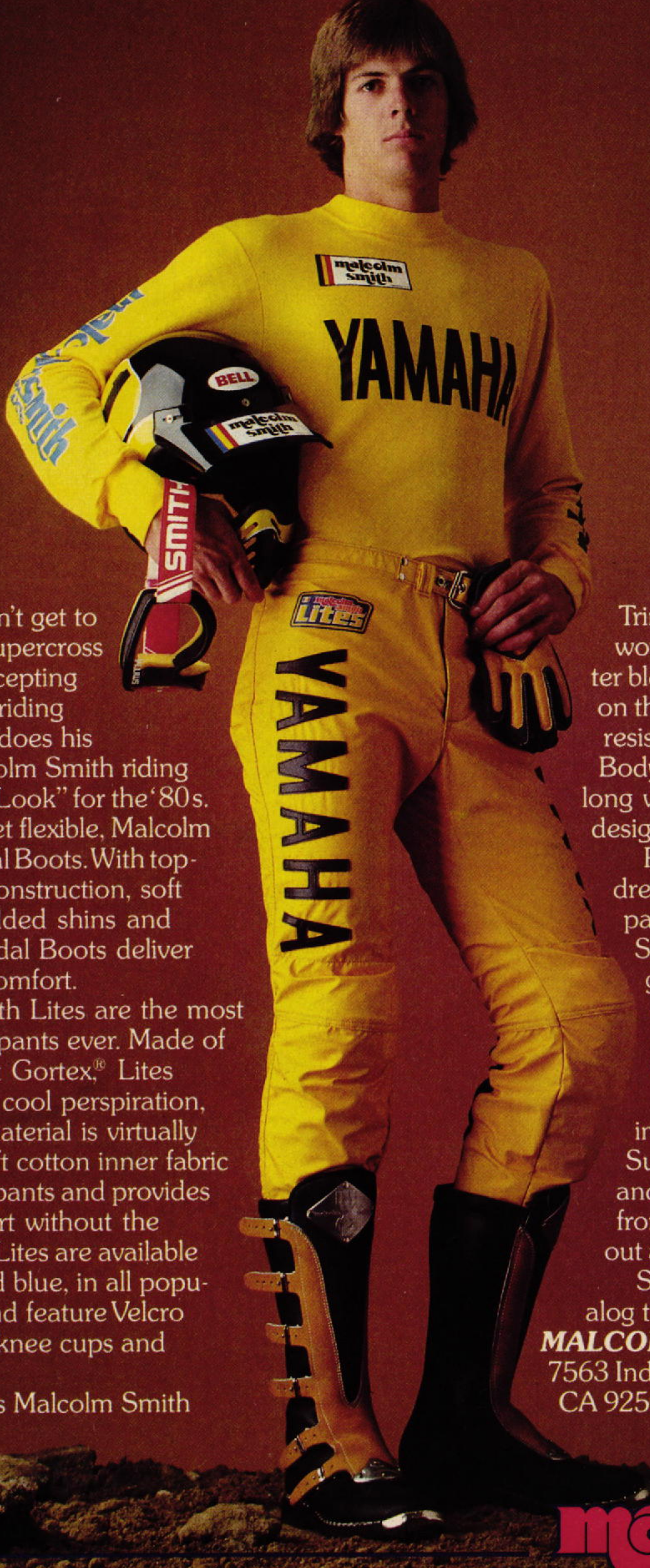

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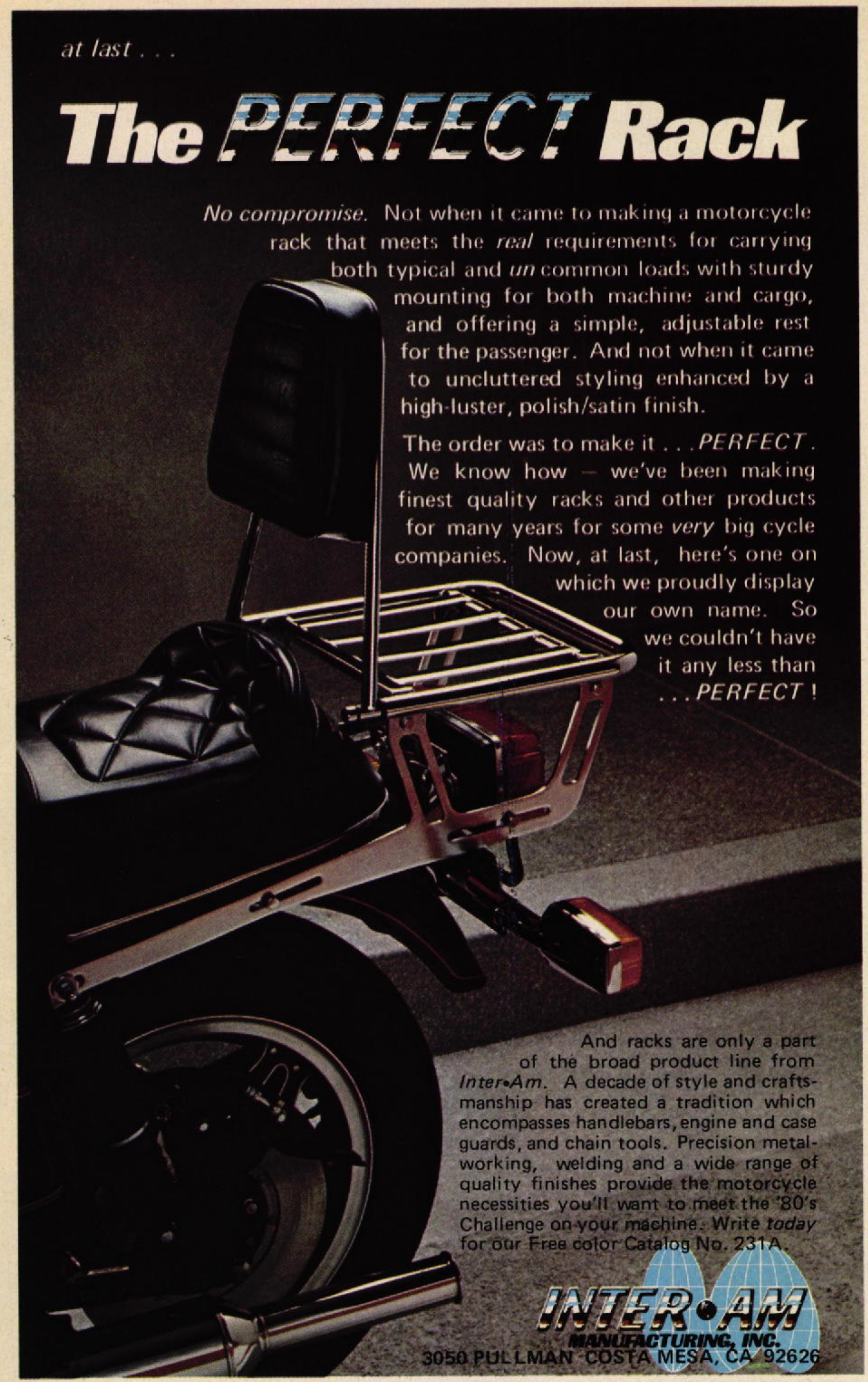

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**Cooley (34) led Croz (316) and Spencer**

*Though Freddie's out of this frame . . .*

**Then Crosby led Wester and Freddie (19)**

*And Honda was back in the game . . .*

**Then Spencer gassed by both Suzukis**

*Before his pit crew came up lame . . .*

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Superbike Friday 1981 was no exception. It began when, on Thursday, Graeme Crosby and Wes Cooley—two Suzuki-mounted teammates riding, yes, for Yoshimura—tied, *tied* mind you, to the one-thousandth of a second in qualifying. The time, two minutes and 7.826 seconds each, was rendered immaterial when Croz, who posted his fast-lap before Cooley, was awarded the pole. Freddie Spencer pushed his Honda to within 0.9 seconds of the leaders for third, and Eddie Lawson and Australian Wayne Gardner qualified their Kawasakis in fourth and fifth, rounding out the front row.

Friday's event was hardly less electrifying, as the top three qualifiers stretched away from the rest of the field and played swapmeet with the lead. Entries from a reporter's notebook during the early stages of the race, listing the first rider across the start/finish line read: lap one, Cooley; lap two, Crosby; lap three, Cooley; lap five, Spencer; lap six, Crosby; lap eight, Cooley. The riders were passing lap money around like it was counterfeit.

As if that weren't enough, the Honda pit people boosted the excitement ante when, on lap 12, Spencer came in for gas. Some fuel spilled on his hot motor and caught fire, and as Spencer leapt off the machine it fell to the ground where the flames were extinguished by the alert, but scrambling, crew. Spencer remounted before the smoke had cleared—and was started and away before an official examination of the damage—but he lost 20 seconds in the process, and couldn't thereafter threaten the leaders. He finished third.

Cooley and Crosby, meanwhile, were pitting for gas on lap 13, allowing the Kawasaki of Eddie Lawson to lead. Cooley was out first, and reeled in the slower bike by the 18th circuit, with Crosby close behind. In all, Cooley was credited with leading seven times, with Croz leading six. The Yoshimura Suzukis had muscle on the rest of the field, but not much on each other.

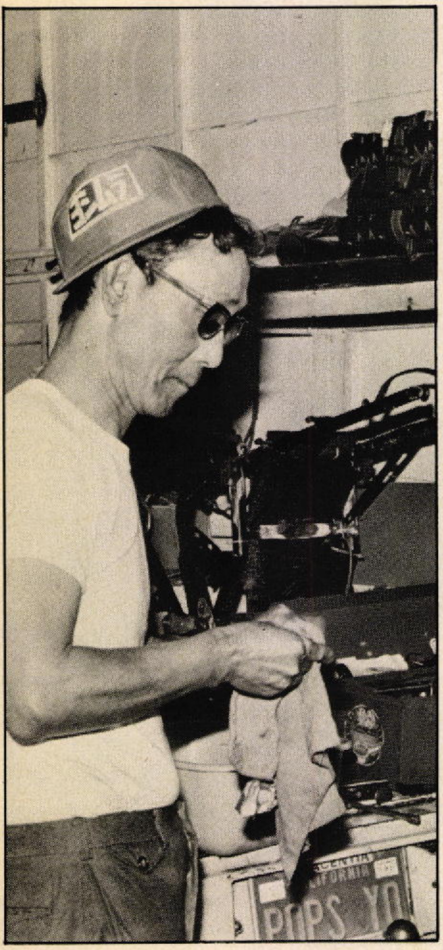
As the 26th, and final, lap approached, the popular consensus had Crosby, in second place, the winner because he was in position to draft Cooley on the banking. In fact, that

*Continued*

19
FREDDIE
HONDA

**The fire is out but Freddie's still leery**

*Gas can burn with no flame.*



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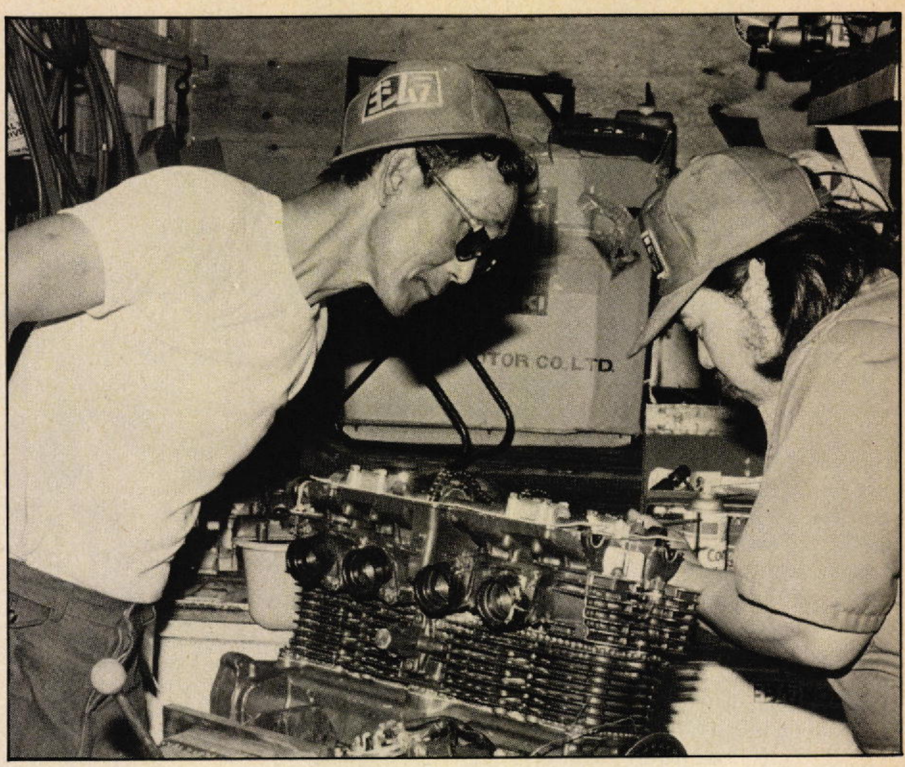


**Yoshimura engines are things of beauty, created equal**

*Good helpers and a watchful eye are part of the recipe, too.*

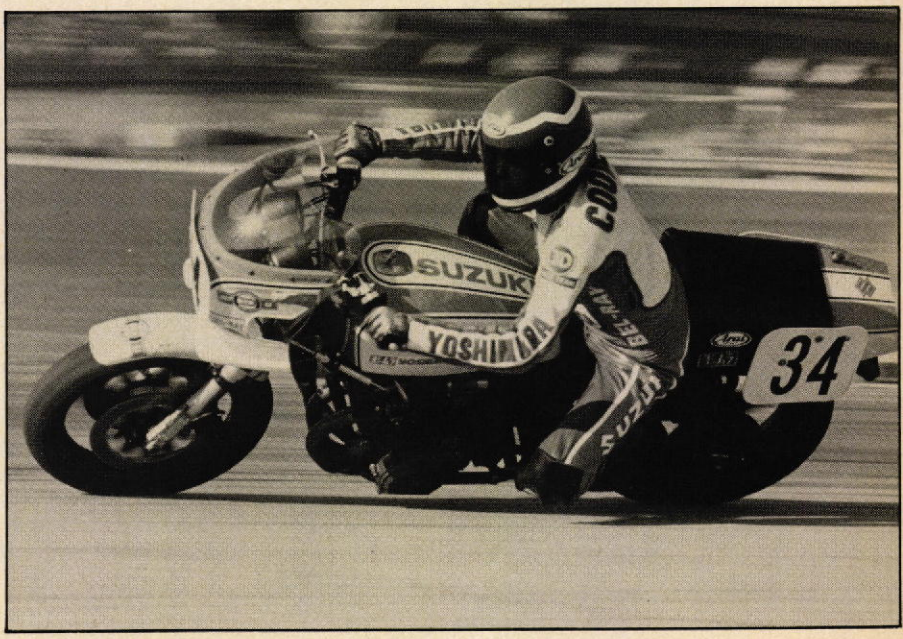
was what was on Crosby's mind. "My plan was to let Wes lead into the last lap and then run up his slipstream to pass," said the New Zealander.

But it was not to be. Coming out of the chicane, Cooley stretched a few yards ahead, and Crosby couldn't build up enough steam to catch the draft. They blew across the finish line 0.7 seconds apart.

In Victory Circle, Croz explained what had happened. "Wes pulled a big slide out of the chicane," he said, "I know—I was watching. But then I started to slide, too, and he was away. I'd like to re-run those last few laps."

For his part, Cooley was heard to say "Graeme was playing the game that I wanted to play, staying behind to pass at the end. But it all worked out okay," he beamed.

As photographers snapped away, Cooley smiled, Crosby smiled, the trophy girls smiled. And, oh yes, a smile was seen on Pops Yoshimura's face, too. *—Jeff Burtt*



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**Wester Cooley at Superbike speed—a rare moment alone on the track**

*With a 0.7-second margin of victory, his bike was more equal than Crosby's.*

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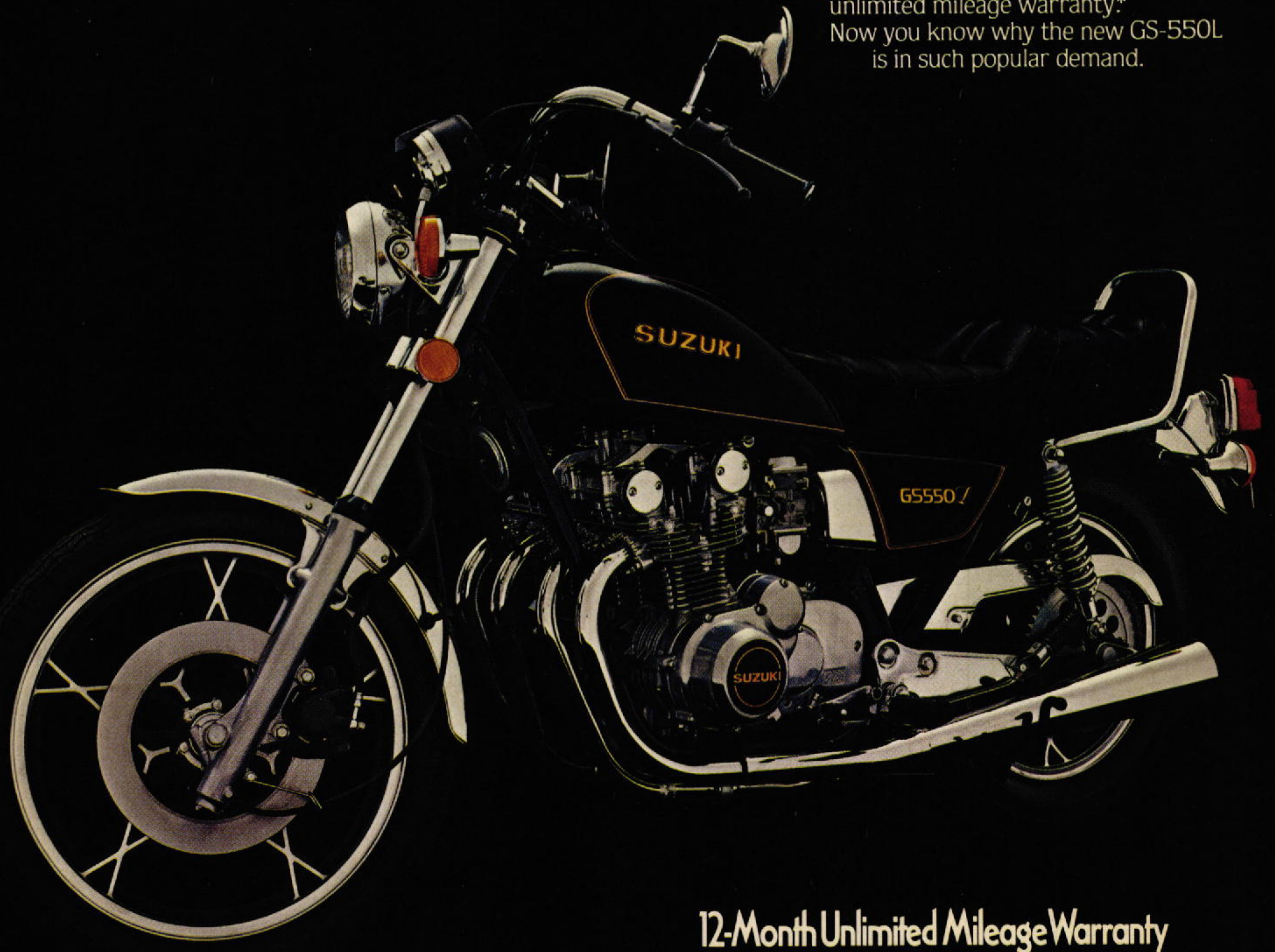

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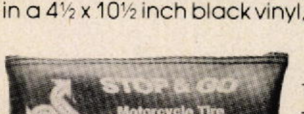
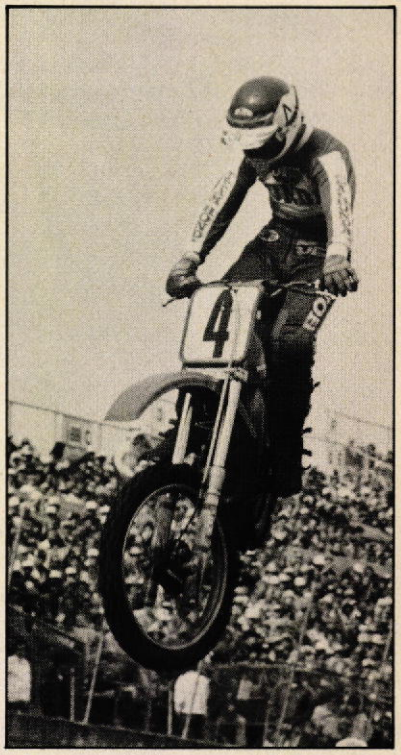


# Pit Bits

• Eddie **Lawson** piloted a **beltless** Kawasaki to his second straight win in the Lightweight event—he won last year on a TZ250. Lawson's belt-driven 250 was tested extensively at the track but **lacked** the proper gear ratios to pull Daytona's banking. A too-small selection of sprockets was blamed. Still, Lawson saddled his **trusty chain-drive** and gave a lesson on passing in traffic to rookie Expert Jim Filice, who finished second in only his third roadrace. (As a Novice, Filice won Daytona and was seventh at Laguna Seca last year.) West Germany's Anton Mang finished third, running his four-year string of Daytona **Lightweight** results to 2-4-3-3.

• Saturday's **Supercross** saw Suzuki's Darrell Shultz in the winner's circle. It was the third win in five outings for the revitalized **Shultz,** and it vaulted him to the top of the standings with seven races left on the calendar. Yamaha's Donnie Cantaloupi and Honda's Jim Gibson followed Shultz home **in front** of an audience claimed at 50,000.



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 PATRICK BEHAR

**Indoors or out, Supercross is Supercross**

*So Sun didn't shine at Daytona.*

• Movin' On Dept.: Marty Tripes' peripatetic motocross career will take him to **Europe** in quest of the 500cc World Championship in 1981. **Tripes** will be Husky-mounted, and will compete in the U.S. at the Carlsbad USGP on June 21.

*Continued*

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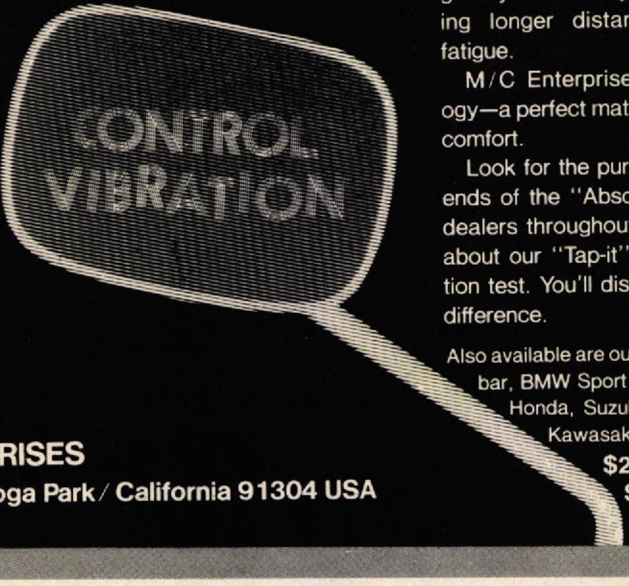

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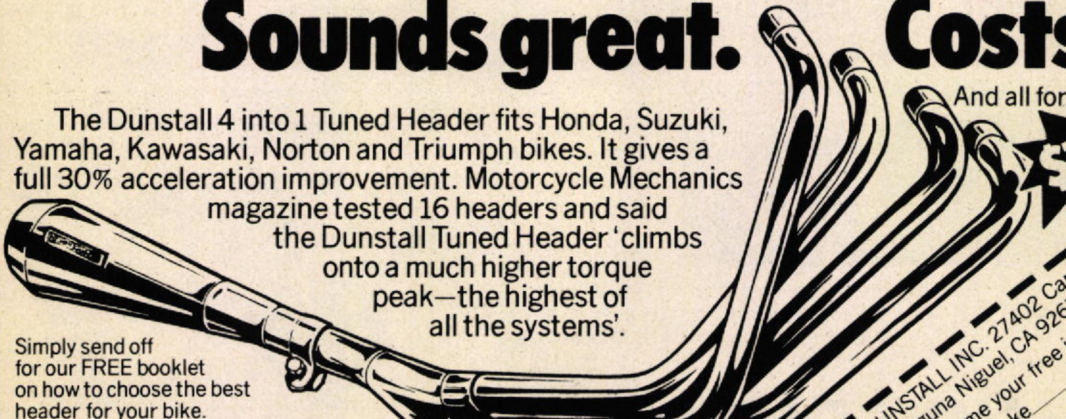

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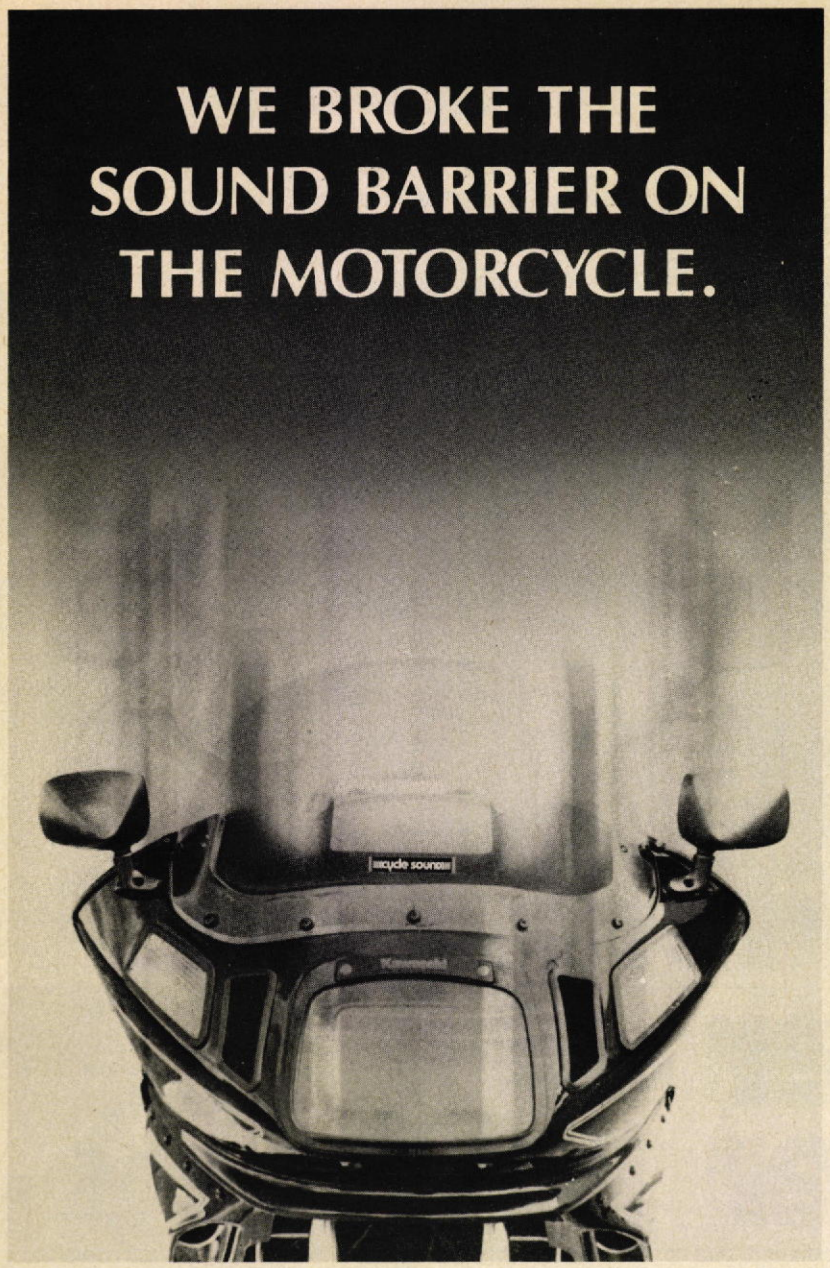

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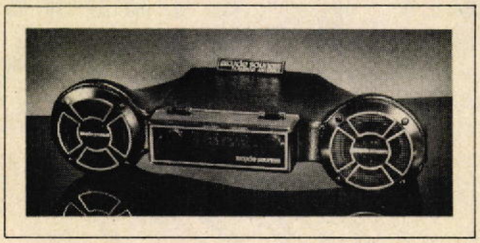
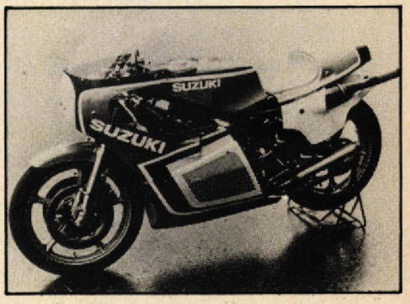


- Daytona wasn't the only Florida venue for **AMA-sanctioned** racing activity last March. About the same time that riders were attacking Big D's oval, quarter-milers were preparing to launch the first-ever AMA/Dragbike! Speedweek Supernationals in Orlando. AMA will sanction **dragrace** activity in 1981 under the aegis of Dragbike!, a Utica, New York-based organization, with an eye toward more involvement in '82.
- Comin' Home File: **Speedway** will take a decided turn for the better **in America** on May 30 when the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum plays host to the U.S. round of the World Speedway Motorcycle Championships. A field of 16 riders will **contest** 20 heat races on a dirt course laid out over the Coliseum's 400-meter running track. The top four riders will advance to two international qualifying rounds in Europe later this summer, with the **World Final** scheduled for London's Wembley Olympic Stadium on September 5. The Los Angeles race will pave the way for bringing the World Final here in 1982, taking it out of Europe for the first time in its 45-year history. FIM officials will be on hand at the **Coliseum,** checking-out the facility—and the organizers—for possible World Final sanction.
- The AFM **Six-Hour,** temporarily orphaned with the selling of Ontario Motor Speedway, has found a home. The West Coast's most **prestigious** endurance road-racing event will unfold at the **Riverside** Raceway on July 25 and 26. A proposed sponsor (99.99 percent sure, according to the promoter) is **Budweiser,** and the purse is rumored to be in the neighborhood of $18,000.
- Big Bucks Dept.: Roadrace news from Holland has set the **price** of Suzuki's RG6 production (read: for sale) racer at 40,000 Guilders. That's about **$17,500** at today's exchange rate. The fork features a three-position adjustable **anti-dive** mechanism, brake discs are 305mm (as opposed to 280mm on last year's RG5 model) and the conventional swingarm is twin-shocked. Talk is that Suzuki's **RG7** model will be available for sale in the U.S. in 1982, in time for the AMA's 500cc roadrace rule. **Save** your pennies. •



**New paint and stickies on the RG6**

*Is there an RG7 in your future?*

*Continued*

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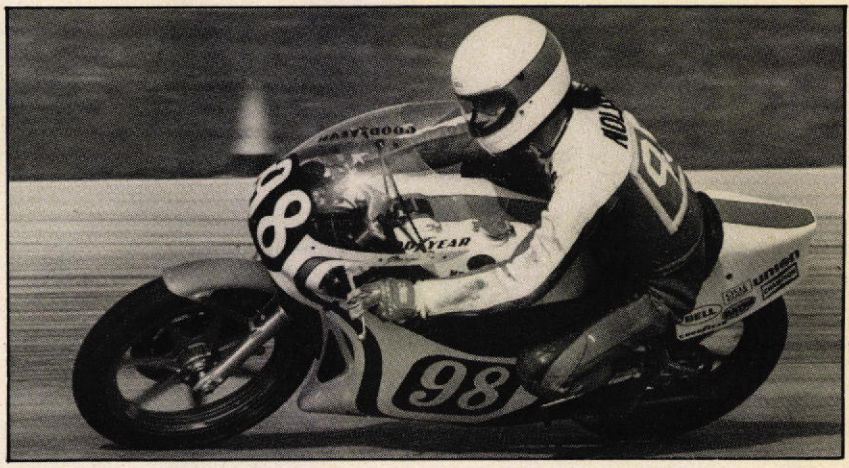
# Winners & Losers

## Another Daytona

### *Privateers as Heroes*



PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 TOM RILES

**AMA Novice George Nolan practicing aboard his TZ250 at Daytona 1981**

*For any Privateer, racing at the Big D requires that you pay your dues.*

• If your image of racing at Daytona is all fast bikes and flashy leathers, then you've never seen the trenches. The trenches are the long, open sheds where most of the privateer competitors stake out their garage space.

In that crowded, sometimes frantic netherworld you begin to understand the energy, the mystical appeal of low-profile roadracing. Late each night during Speed Week, racers in the trenches labor over machines that are often made from little money and lots of hope. There is no glory here. No white-smocked factory mechanics. No glistening transporters. No bejeweled hangers-on.

Most of the privateers who live in the trenches during Speed Week are sponsor, mechanic and rider for a team of one. There is no magic to their being at Daytona; no omnipotent team manager decreed them to be The Chosen. These are riders who have the same dream that many motorcyclists have: to be a roadracer. But unlike most, they've done something about it. These enthusiasts decided that it's worth the effort to go for it. One of them is George Nolan, AMA

*Continued*

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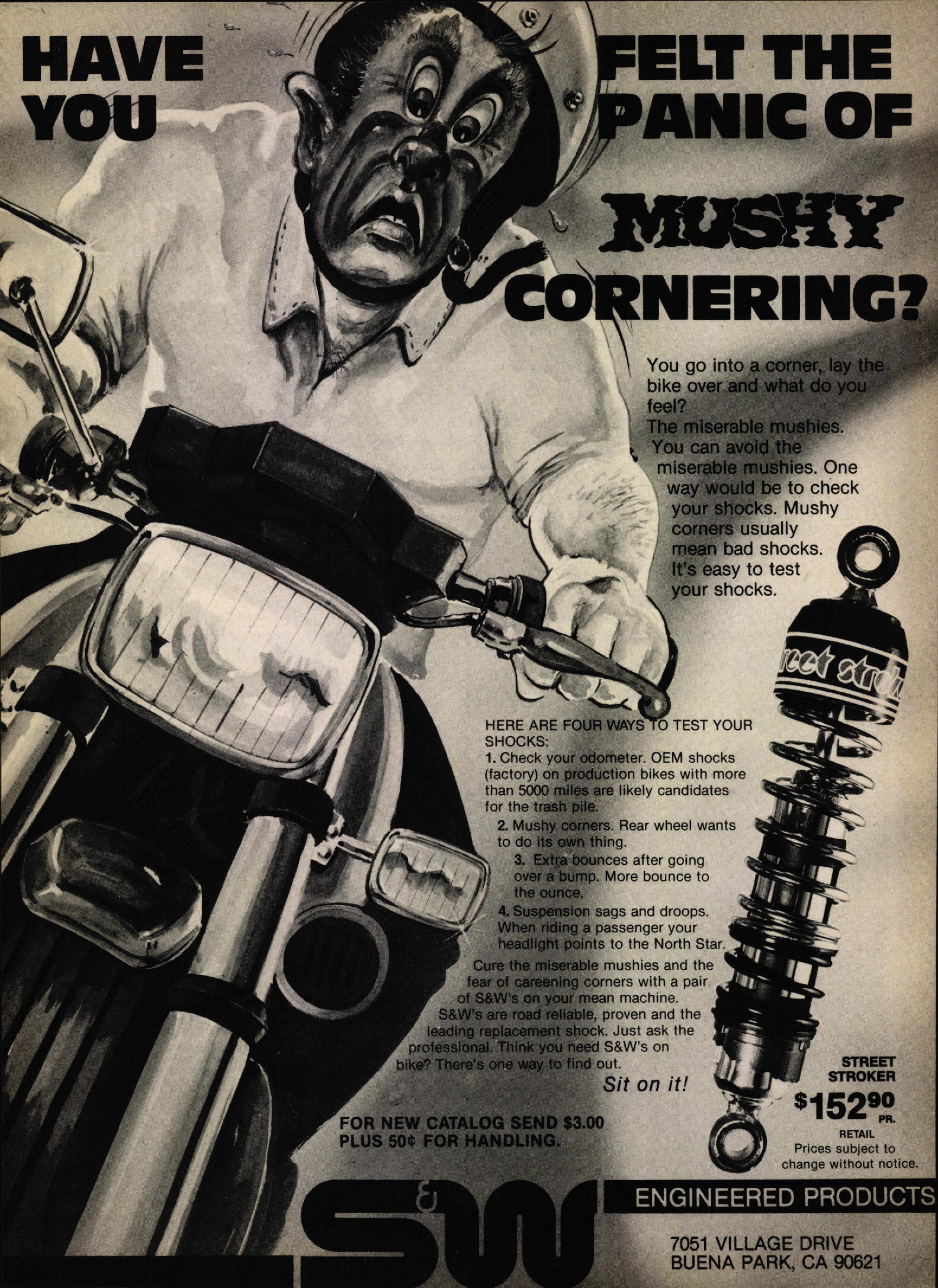
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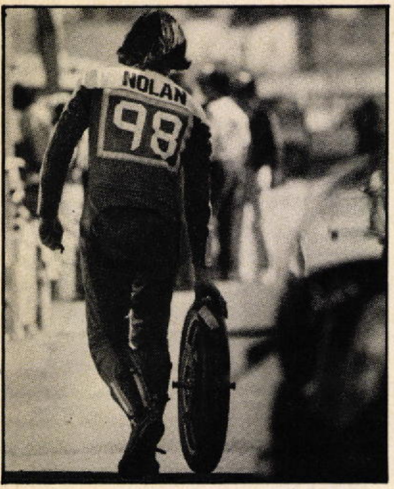

PHOTOGRAPHY © 1981 TOM RILES

**To get things done, you do it yourself**

*No white-smocked factory guys here.*

Novice from Indianapolis, Indiana.

Nolan, at least by privateer standards, is lucky. His racing effort falls between the high-dollar factory teams and the hapless shoestring racers. His TZ250 is only a year old. His van is just four years old, and, best of all, he has an understanding boss. Don't laugh. Have you ever considered just how you would convince your boss that you *had* to take a week off to go roadracing at Daytona? Nolan's approach is organized and efficient. His bike is well-prepared and caused him little trouble during Speed Week.

But even a racer without mechanical worries has plenty to think about. The extra time gives Nolan a chance to run the race many times in his mind, slowing the hours until raceday to a maddening crawl. Only Nolan knows the outcome of the races in his subconscious. In the real Novice race he finished 22nd.

But before you disparage this privateer's accomplishments, consider that Nolan does it all himself. He endures the long drives, the strange food and the big bills without any guarantee of success. For him, the long waits and the tedious fumblings of the amateur officials are worth the chance to race at Daytona. Even though Daytona has lost some of its prestige in the last few years, it's the best America has to offer. For those like George Nolan, who deem roadracing to be a very important thing indeed, life in the trenches, even with all its hard work and disappointments, is worth the hassle.

Watching the efforts of the privateers at Daytona is reminiscent of another story. A lady, having just listened to a magnificent concert, rushed backstage to greet the pianist. "Oh Maestro!" she exclaimed, "I would give my life to play as well as you do."

"But Madame," he replied, "I did."

And so, too, do the privateers at Daytona. —*Riley Tharp*

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# LETTERS *Flesh flash, Balderdash, The past is a present*

### MOTOR CITY

Michael Jordan's editorial, "Welcome To L.A." (*CG*, April '81), leaves me with but one question: If you are not going to apologize for Los Angeles, maybe you still owe us an apology for all of those sillyass "choppers" that clutter up the showrooms of all the UJM dealers.

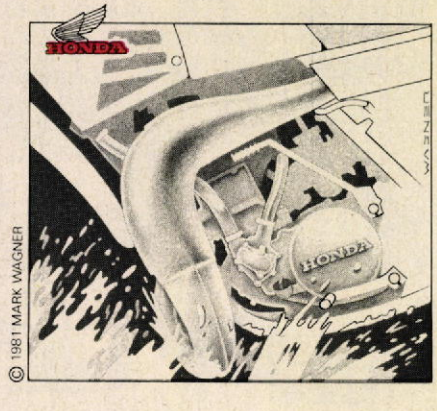
Jack Causey
Odem, Texas

*Horsefeathers. Customs sell by the trainload in everyone's neck of the woods—ed.*

### PAST PERFECT

In reference to your March '81 editorial comments on the, uh, problem of new motorcycle prices and sluggish sales, may I suggest that there are additional reasons for riders staying out of the market? I have a flawless 1976 KZ750 with 24,000 miles on it and my, uh, problem lies in finding a new bike that offers, like mine, the following: a kickstarter, a headlight on-off switch, an electric starter sans gear or clutch interlocks, a speedometer that reflects the machine's entire performance range and an engine whose cold-running characteristics don't make me an unwitting menace on the highway. I'm quite sure that I'm not the only one who has decided to forgo the numerous irritants that seem to come as standard equipment on machines these days.

Douglas G. Phinney
Maple Shade, New Jersey



© 1981 MARK WAGNER

### ANOTHER, UH, PROBLEM?

Your March editorial joins a steady flow of industry self-examination: Why are sales low when gas prices are high? You list danger, social unacceptability, lack of training facilities, high maintenance and insurance costs, etc., as possible reasons.

I feel another reason exists, much closer to the editorial desks of America's leading motorcycle magazines. Staffed to a disproportionate degree by road and/or dirt racers, you so worship 42mm forks and banana swingarms that seasoned riders—not to mention the elusive entry-level rider—soon burn out chasing the yearly hot set-up.

Too, the dual pressures for a "cover" by manufacturers—spurred by a desire for ad revenue by your own publisher—leave the enthusiast very little sport-oriented journalism. This was clearly pointed out on the covers of February's *Motorcyclist* and *Cycle World*. Virtually identical shots of GPz Kawasakis, ridden by intent young men in color-coordinated leathers must surely have embarrassed the respective editors. Not since the old *Motor Trend* "Car of the Year" award was divided into "Domestic", "Import" and "Truck of the Year", ad nauseam, to further maximize ad revenue

*Continued*

**Heavyweight Punch In The Middleweight Class**

Now you can have the same punch for your middleweight that Vance and Hines builds into all of their Pro Stock championship exhaust systems. This pipe has been specially designed to take advantage of the performance potential of your middleweight Suzuki or Kawasaki.

It's Quality too, with fine workmanship to assure perfect fit; super chrome finish to minimize bluing and rusting.

**Available for all Suzuki Fours and Kawasaki 650, 750, 1000.**
$199.50 Black, $209.95 in Chrome + shipping, CA residents add 6% sales tax

Suzuki 750

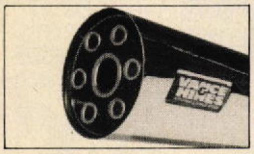
Kawasaki 750

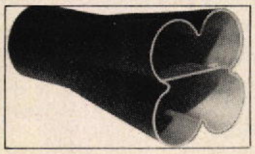
**VANCE & HINES**

14010 Marquardt Ave.,
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(213) 921-7461

1 PRO

**Other Knockout Features Include:**


Power-Flow* Baffle


Twin Flow* Collector For Maximum Power

Easy oil filter access.

Centerstand can be retained.

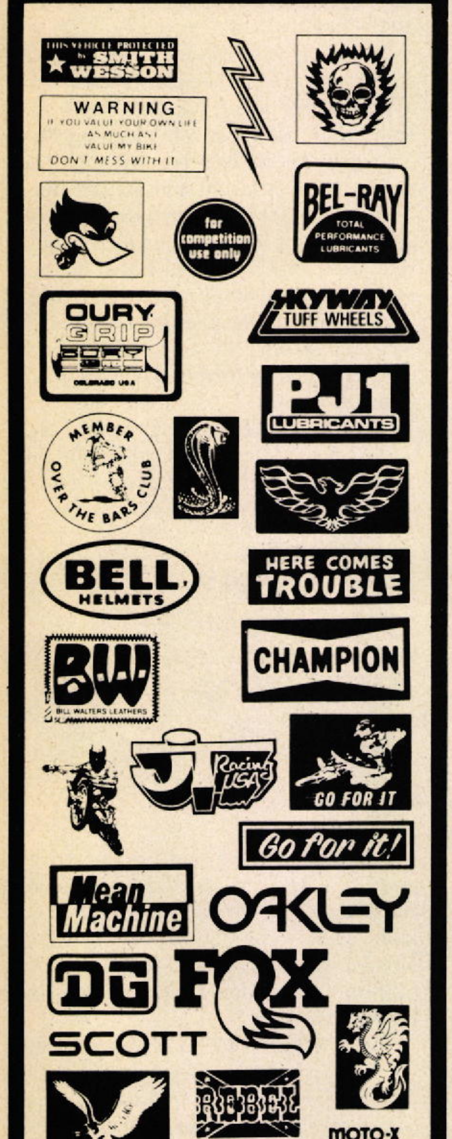
Maximum cornering clearance.

* ©1981 VHR

Send $2.00 for our catalogue of all Vance & Hines Peformance Products, including Piston Kits, Camshafts, Carbs, Wheelie Bars and Professional Machine Shop Services.

# STICKERS!

**YOUR CHOICE 50¢**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WARNING
IF YOU VALUE YOUR OWN LIFE AS MUCH AS I VALUE MY BIKE DON'T MESS WITH IT
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Available in clear or light smoke tint.

All the features of a Slipstreamer II . . . plus.

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For all round headlight motocycles except - Honda CX - 500 Custom and Deluxe, CVB-900 & Yamaha XS 850.

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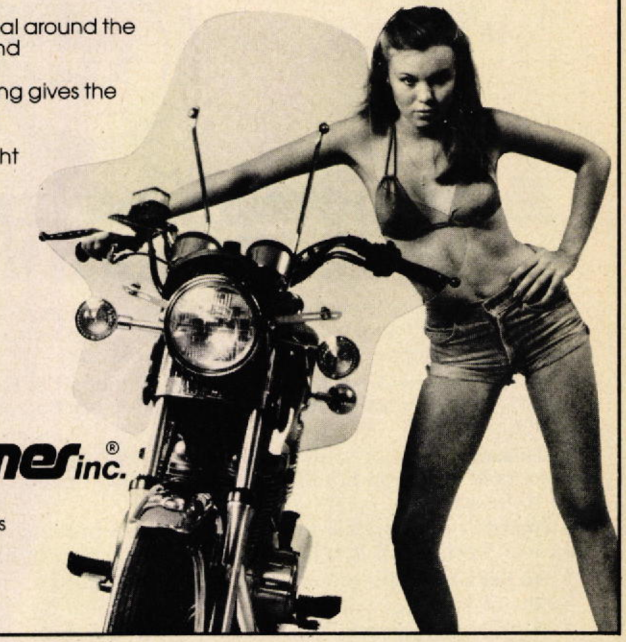
For all rectangular headlight motorcycles.



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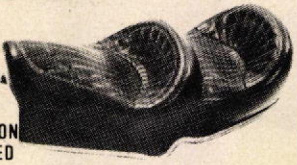

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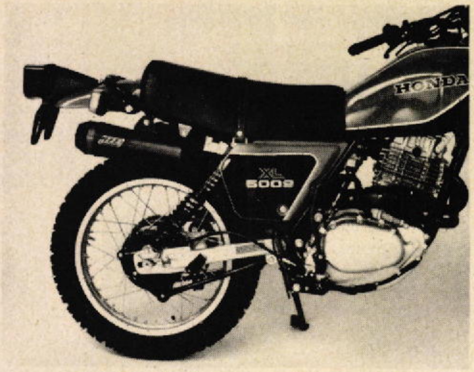
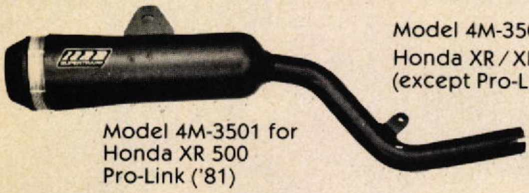
**Big 4-Inch SuperTrapp:**



**More power and less noise for Honda, Yamaha thumpers**

Here's the perfect muffler/spark arrestor for Honda's XR/XL 500 and Yamaha's TT/XT 500. It's an all-new, 4-inch SuperTrapp designed specifically for these applications. Here's what it offers you:

- **More Power.** A 3-hp increase over stock muffler at same noise level on XR and TT; tuneable for up to 5-hp increase. A 2-hp increase over Honda's Hop-Up Kit muffler!
- **Quieter.** Tuneable to street-legal noise level on XT and XL models. Cuts noise 66% over Honda's XR500 Hop-Up Kit muffler and our smaller 3" disc SuperTrapp.
- **Lighter.** Less than half the weight and bulk of stock mufflers for a savings of over 5 pounds. SuperTrapp for Honda: 5.5 lbs. For Yamaha: 5.25 lbs.
- **No Packing.** Patented all-metal core has nothing to burn out or replace. No maintenance.
- **Wide Tire Clearance.** Will take 5.2"-wide knobbies.
- **Easy Installation.** Bolts quickly to stock head pipe. A perfect fit. Comes with inlet pipe, brackets, all hardware, tuning instructions.



Model 4M-3500 for Honda XR/XL500 (except Pro-Link)

Model 4M-3501 for Honda XR 500 Pro-Link ('81)

Model 4M-4500 for Yamaha TT/XT 500 (1977 and later)

**Flash: New Model 4M-3501 for '81 XR 500 Pro-Link Honda. Has an 9 dbA noise reduction over stock (65%) and save 1½ pounds!**

*Other 4-stroke-single applications available soon.

SUPERTRAPP

Discojet Corp.
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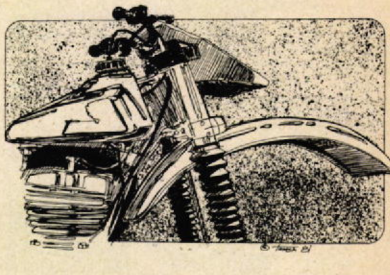
## LETTERS

has the enthusiast been treated to more blatant examples of "I'll put you on the cover twice this year if you buy ad package 'A'." Few, if any, covers are given over to the *sport* of motorcycling.

In closing, your last sentence pleads for continued technological escalation: "We'll pay the price." What absolute rubbish! Your journalistic freeloading distorts your ability to report on anything more than seat height and quarter-mile times. Until the testing personnel of America's motorcycle magazines pay their own way, they will never understand why none of my bikes will ever be ridden through the quarter-mile at near-potential speeds. My personal motorcycling horizons lie further down the road than 1320 feet.

Bruce F. Armstrong, Jr.
Ojai, California

*But apparently not much. And CG covers are not for sale—ed.*



### MOVIEOLA

I've searched high and low and tried every film and videotape distributor in the Denver area with no success. Do you know where I can obtain a VHR of the original "On Any Sunday?" Also, can you confirm if the rumored "On Any Sunday II" is in the works?

Stan Flint
Denver, Colorado

*Yes, it opens July 10 in Los Angeles, with local showings after that. No tapes of the original were made—ed.*

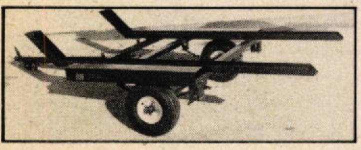
### AD SKIN

I was flipping through the April '81 issue when my eyes became riveted to the ads found on pages 24, 36 and 46. My mother-in-law noticed them too, and exclaimed "What kind of magazine are you reading?" Upon my explanation, she declared that I should just buy *Playboy* if I wanted to look at "nekkid wimmin."

So CYCLE GUIDE has decided to show some skin. I really thought you were above that. I can remember back in the early Seventies when there was a rash of this same kind of advertising ploy, but a lot of criticism (and not just from preachers) finally got it stopped. Times have changed, though, and sex and nudity is again becoming commonplace, even on

*Continued*

**CYCLE TRAILERS**



100% tubular steel frame, center rail optional, 1,500 lbs. cap. tilt bed, protected lighting, ramp incl. "*STAND ON*" 4ft steel fenders (no more lost or bent) "half moon fenders" it's a great surface for a tool box.

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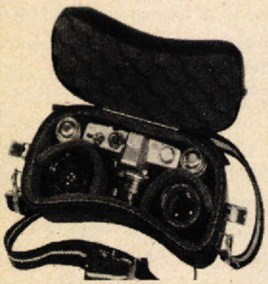

And do it safely. The Kustomold Case is designed to fit your body like skin and protect your camera like an armored guard. Perfect for bikers.

- **WAISTE/SHOULDER STRAP**
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**$26.95**

Send check or money order.
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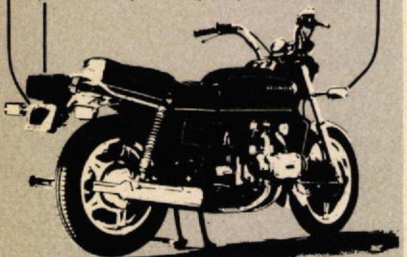
Dealer Inquiries Invited

**The Dualock Frontlight Coupler is a bright idea!**
Turn your front turnsignals into running lights, without interfering with normal functioning. Greatly increases front end visibility, day and night. Only 7 color-coded wires, installs instantly. Only $24.95.

**The Dualock Automatic Turnsignal Canceler turns you off!**
Avoid turning a signal into a road hazard with this easily installed solid state canceler. With only three wires to connect (no cutting or splicing!) this sealed unit installs in minutes. The adjustable timer turns off your lights, even if you forget. Only $24.95.

**The Dualock Dualarm is a loudmouth when you're not there!**
Deter thieves with this weatherproof self-contained alarm. A tough ABS housing protects the solid state adjustable sensor sounding off through dual horns–after 45 seconds of 110db noise, the alarm automatically rearms. With interlock switches behind the chrome-plated steel cover and impossible-to-remove mounting hardware, the Dualarm is tamperproof. Only $49.95.

**The Dualock Multi-Brite Taillight Coupler lights up your life!**
Improve visibility and safety with this simply wired taillight coupler (only 7 color-coded wires!). Turns rear signals into running and brake lights, without interfering with turn-signal functioning. The solid state Multi-Brite–a tiny sealed package–a big improvement in your safety. Only $24.95.



See your local dealer or write
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This time do it right! Replace those worn-out parts with a high mileage **BARNETT** clutch. We build and stock the most complete line of corprene and BarFlex friction plates, aluminum, steel or copper-plated steel drive plates and heavy-duty chrome silicone clutch springs. **BARNETT** is also THE source for extra-plate racing clutches used by some of the fastest racers in the world.

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Today San Jose BMW puts unbeatable control into your hands, with "The Handling Kit". The kit's 6061-T6 aircraft grade Upper Triple Clamp and the San Jose BMW Superbike-replica swingarm modification maximize front- and rear-wheel alignment to give you better cornering control. Additionally, the kit's rebuildable; forced sensitive dampening, black FOX SHOX are sure to give you the edge. And when you face hard braking conditions, you can rely on the kit's chromed 4-inch front fork bottoming springs to minimize front end dive. Racing or touring, you're on the move. So maneuver smoother with "The Handling Kit". By San Jose BMW. (Fits all 1970 and later BMW's short- and long-swingarm).

**The San Jose BMW Handling Kit**
$399 complete (Swingarm modified on exchange basis) Add $20.00 for polished and anodized Upper Triple Clamp in:
☐ Blue, ☐ Red, ☐ Black, ☐ Green, ☐ Gold
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MC Model__________ MC Year__________
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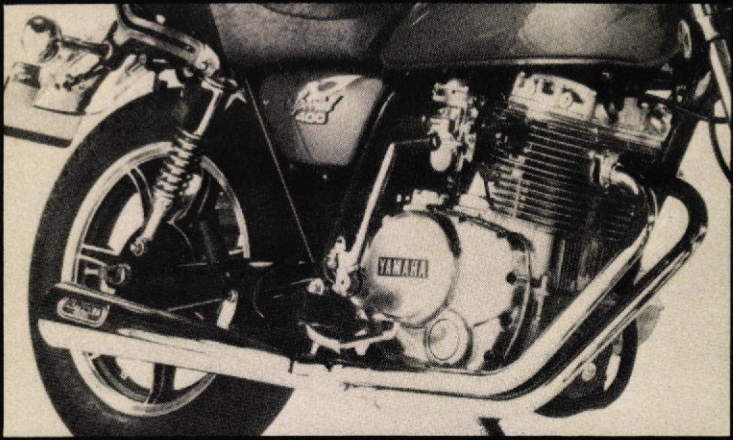
PRO-formance™!



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The deeper, throatier sound of the ALPHABET 2 into 1 Turnout Custom adds the radical sport look to your Yamaha 650 or Triumph 650 or 750.

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Send for your FREE copy today! To cover postage/handling, enclose 50¢ for third class mail (mail 4-6 weeks), OR $1 for 1st class mail (allow 7-10 days). Canadian and foreign requests must include US$2 - no exceptions. Clearly PRINT name and address. **714-556-RIDE**

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1981
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DISCOUNT MOTORCYCLE ACCESSORIES

## LETTERS

TV. The chopper magazines always have had plenty of skin showing, but I always considered them second-class pulps. Now I'm not so sure if I want to leave my copy of *CG* around lest the kids should find it.

Besides being sexually suggestive, I think these ads infer that it's sexy to be on a motorcycle wearing the bare minimum. We all know the wisdom of wearing protective gear. I know the idea behind this is to get your undivided attention, but how does the client ever expect to get his product noticed when the reader's eyes are glued to the wonders of nature?

I like your magazine: I read it from cover to cover and glean a lot of information from it every month. I'm not a prude: I like good-lookin' women as well as any red-blooded American boy. What I'm asking is must you stoop to this? Is it really necessary? Will you please read this and do something about it, because I look forward to receiving a first-class *motorcycle* magazine.

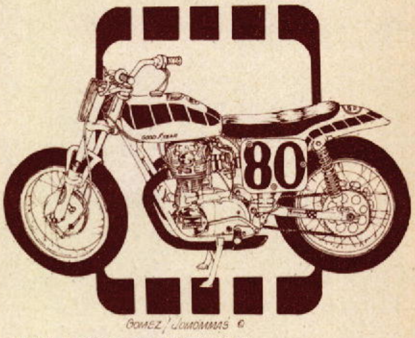
Stephen Byarlay
Flat River, Missouri

### NO CHOCOLATE MESS REVISITED

I was very pleased to see that someone has decided to get aesthetics into motorcycle design. I am referring, of course, to the Porsche-design SR500. I think it's incredibly good-looking, but I must admit to some reservations about the wheel covers.

Kevin Garrett
Los Angeles, California

*Did you just move here from Hershey, Pennsylvania?—ed.*



### MV AGUSTA MAVEN

Please inform Mr. George Wegner that Honda's GP record, though very impressive, is not unsurpassed. As noted in the December '80 issue, Honda has won 16 world championships and has 137 GP victories, but this is small potatoes compared to the record of MV Agusta.

During their 25-year involvement in the GP wars, MV won 270 world championship races, 38 individual world championships and 37 manufacturer's titles.

*Continued*

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Superior design and performance • Handcrafted fiberglass construction • Accepts your stock headlight and any style handlebar • 3 shield types • Gold striping • Signal mounting bosses • All hardware included. •
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| 4.50-18 | $73.88 |
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| WINNING 4/1 Blk | $189.00 |
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| DYNA "S" | $88.88 |
| PRESTOLITE | $72.88 |
| IGNITOR | $97.88 |
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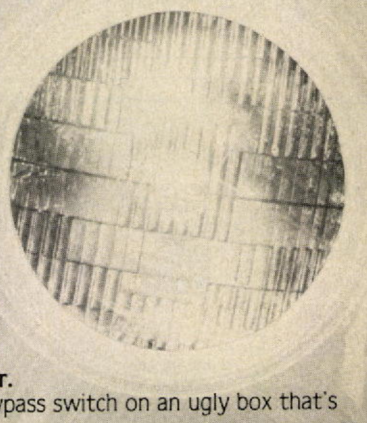

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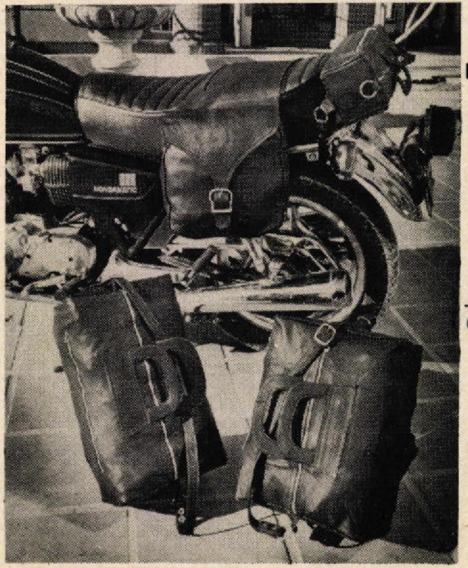

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# LETTERS

Sadly, MV Agusta is no longer with us, but with the way that Honda's current GP campaign has been going it looks as if MV's *truly* unsurpassed record will stand for some time.

Kevin Wright
St. Louis, Missouri

**OVER THERE, OVER THERE**

I'm a subscriber and an Army Sergeant with 19 years of service, currently stationed in Okinawa. I have but one complaint and it's not even against you. It's about the many letters you print with people begging for the RD350, XJ650, XJ550, etc. Hell, the Japanese can't even get them! In Japan, the XJ550 is an XJ400, the XJ650 is not available and the RD350 is a 250. The good stuff that you test, like the CBX and GL1100, cost the Japanese anywhere from $8000 to $10,000—and they make them! Most Japanese can't even get a license to operate one. So tell all those complaining Americans to relax, the Japanese will always cater to your demands—witness all those ugly Specials.

Carl L. Poston
Okinawa, Japan

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**TIME MARCHES ON**

Tell Gingerelli that there's at least one "completely different" person out there who appreciates the Moto Morini 500 Sport. Me. Of course, Gingerelli is apparently suffering from such an advanced case of Asian Insanity that he wouldn't recognize a truly sporting motorcycle if one ran over him.

It strikes me as odd that, on the one hand, you spend over $500 to de-Specialize that gilded garbage scow of a Yamaha, but you weren't willing to invest any time or effort on the Morini. We already have too few choices left in bikes without CYCLE GUIDE hastening the demise of yet another make. I still remember when Paul Dean put the last spike in Ossa's coffin with his GP III test a few years back. Isn't one kill a decade enough to keep you guys happy?

Bruce Currie
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

*Gee, a year into the Eighties and we've already used up our "kill?" Ain't it funny how time slips away?—ed.* ●

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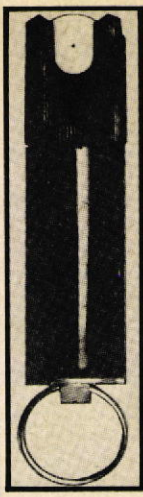

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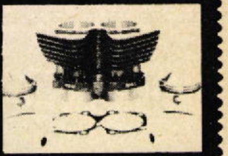
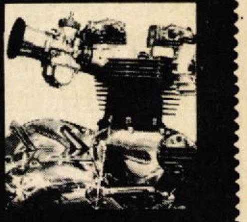

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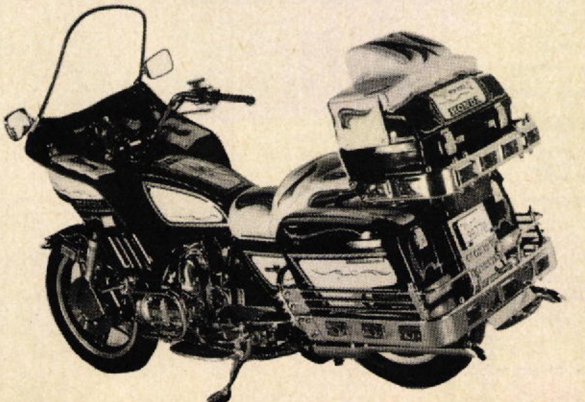

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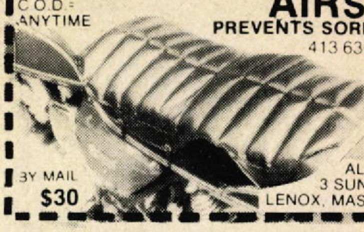

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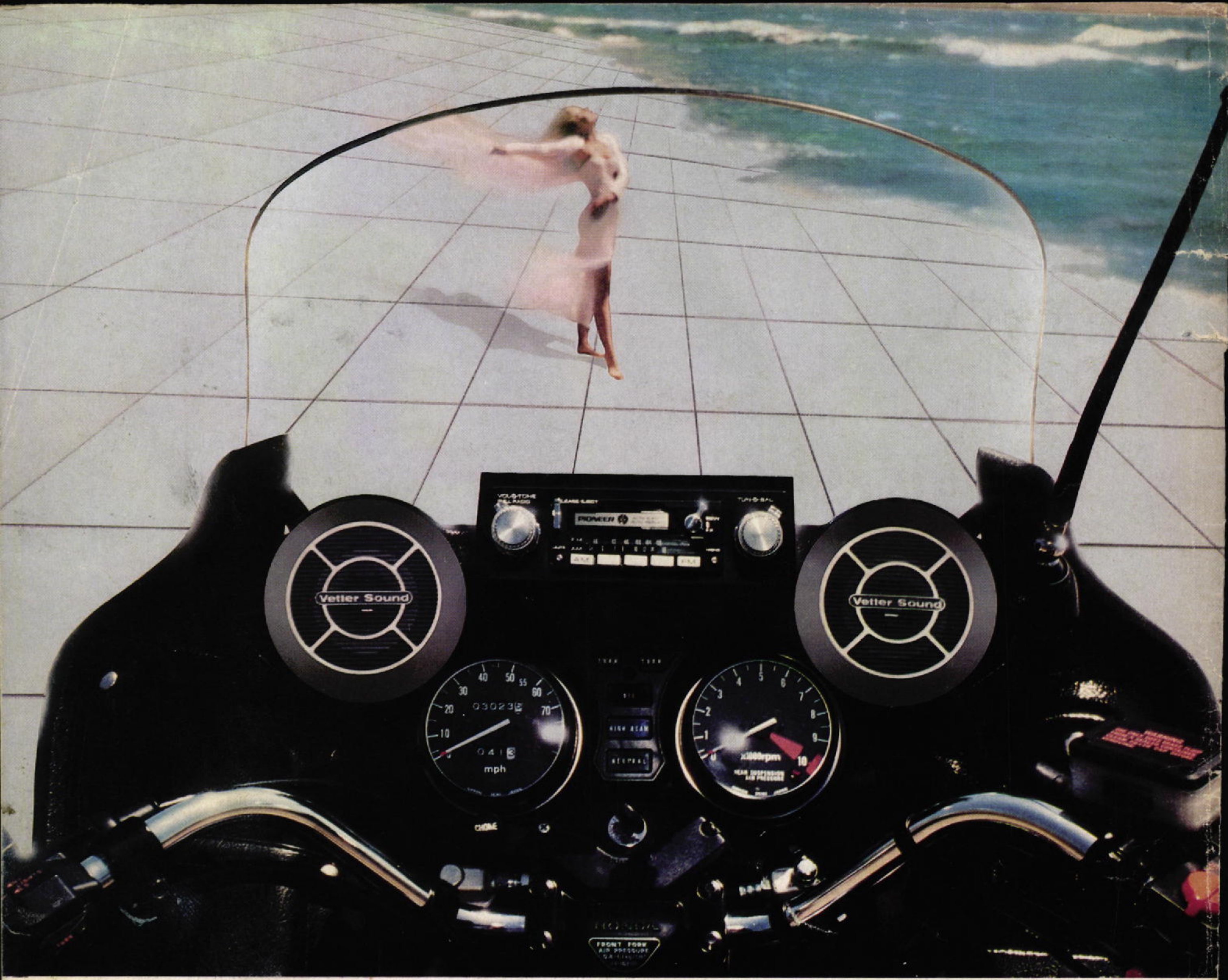

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